

# 9U Rules

1. THIS IS A NON-COMPETITIVE INSTRUCTIONAL DIVISION WITH EMPHASIS ON TEACHING BASEBALL SKILLS, HAVING FUN AND TO STRESS GOOD SPORTSMANSHIP.

It is the duty of the Manager and his/her Coaches to teach the players to hit, field, run the bases, and the throw the ball. These skills are to be combined with overall ball etiquette on & off the field and GOOD sportsmanship.

**In order to help with this, in addition to the standard ROOKIE BALL RULES (Q2) from Baseball Ontario, the following additional interpretations of the rules will be applied in regular and playoff play (Assuming agreement). Coaches should ensure umpires are aware of these rules prior to the start of each game.**

2. **PARTICIPATION**

There will be 10 defensive positions, consisting of 6 infielders and 4 outfielders. Teams with only 7 players in attendance at a particular game may still play. No Automatic outs. All players MUST play at least 2 innings per game in a defensive position. Any player playing only 2 innings in a game in a defensive position is not allowed to spend both innings in the outfield.

3. **COACHES ON FIELD**

During the first 5 games of the season one coach, on the defensive side, will be allowed in the grass part of the field to assist his/her players. After the fifth game, a defensive coach will only be allowed on the field upon mutual agreement between teams prior to the start of the game. A Manager or designated Coach with the offensive team will also be on the field to "feed" the balls into the pitching machine for his/her team while batting, and **MUST WEAR A HELMET WITH EAR FLAPS. Failure to do so will result in immediate ejection of that coach.** If Coach is a Bantam aged player they must also have a chin strap. Managers, should avoid the live play, and during the play may not make contact with the ball or any player.

4. **POSITIONS**

Since this is a development division, all players must play a different position from game to game throughout the regular season, wherever possible. The goal would be to have each player play every position during the regular season. There is no penalty for failure to do this. However, if the players are to develop and enjoy the game, time spent in various positions will encourage them.

5. **BATTING ORDER**

Teams will use a continuous batting order. All players present at each game will be given a position in the batting order and they will take their regular turn at bat even when not in the defensive lineup for that inning. The batting order will be determined prior to the start of the game and will not change during the game.

## 6. BASE RUNNERS

Runners cannot leave the base until the batter makes contact with the ball. If an infraction occurs, the ball will be declared dead and runners may not advance. One (1) warning will be issued and for any further infractions. Thereafter the runner will be called out. (Each team may receive 1 warning). No stealing allowed. There shall be no advancement of base runners until the ball is legally batted into play. EXAMPLE: No advancement on any passed ball or ball thrown into foul territory or out of bounds (out of bounds area is to be determined by the plate Umpire before the start of the game). When the ball is in foul territory or out of play, either off the catcher or overthrown, the play is called dead and the base runners may not advance. This includes all diamonds whether it's a fenced diamond or not. A player cannot run on a third strike pitch dropped by the catcher.

## 7. PITCHING MACHINE RULES

a) The pitching machine is placed directly in front of home plate at a distance of 44 ft.

b) An 8 ft. diameter safety circle shall be marked off directly in front of home plate and its center shall be 44 ft. from home plate. No player is permitted to enter the safety circle which is considered a dead ball area. Enter means that any part of the body enters the safety circle.

c) The pitcher must stand beside the pitching machine outside of the safety circle and behind the release point of the pitching machine. Lines shall be drawn from the release point to 4 ft. beyond the circle. The pitcher must have both feet on the white line until the ball is released from the machine. Only the pitcher can return a live ball to the operating Coach with runners on base. The pitcher must wear a regulation batting helmet with an attached chin strap and **a manufacturer approved face mask**. Neither the pitcher nor any other player may in any way break the plane of the 8 foot diameter circle around the machine whether stepping on the circle line or reaching into the circle while in an attempt to field a ball. Play will be called dead and 1 base will be awarded. All other forced runners will move 1 base.

d) The pitching machine speeds can be altered only at the end of an inning. Machine speed is a maximum of 35 mph and a minimum of 30 mph. Height can be adjusted at any time. **No Free Pitches.**

e) If a batted ball hits the pitching machine or any adult in the playing field, then the ball is declared dead and the batter is awarded first base with the corresponding move of any base runners who may be forced to move. The coach feeding the machine must not interfere with any play being made by the defensive team. Otherwise, the batter will be called out and the runners will be returned to their base of origin. In case of the third out the side is retired.

f) When a thrown ball hits the pitching machine or the cord within the circle, then the ball is declared dead and each base runner (including the batter-runner) shall advance one base from the time the ball becomes dead.

## 8. BATTERS

Each batter shall receive a maximum of 5 strikes as called by the umpire. If a player does not hit a fair ball within 5 strikes he / she is declared out. If a ball crosses the plate over a batter's head or bounces in the dirt, the Umpire will not count it as a strike unless the player swings at the pitch. **BATTERS CANNOT WALK OR BUNT.** (Bunts will be called an automatic out)

Batters at Rookie Ball must drop the bat and not throw it (intentionally or unintentionally) upon hitting the ball. Penalty, each team shall be entitled to one warning per game. After the warning, any further offences by a team shall result in the batter being declared out, the ball being dead and runners returning to their bases.

**Baseball Ontario Rule Q2.3 (y) thrown bat** Add at the end of Q2.3 y) the following: "**If, prior to the team's warning, a batter throws the bat resulting in an injury, the ball is dead and play shall be halted and the team will receive its warning. The player's at bat will continue.**"

## 9. SCORING RULE

1. Each half inning will end either with 3 outs or after the 10th batter. The 10th batter must be declared to the umpire and defensive team, with an acknowledgement that both have heard the declaration.
2. If there are less than 2 out with the 10th batter at the plate, the catcher or pitcher must have the ball and touch home plate to end the inning. Runs scored before this count.
3. If there are 2 outs with the 10th batter at the plate, a 3rd out can be forced at the necessary base.

## 10. BALL OUT OF PLAY

On any ball thrown into foul territory or out of play, no extra base shall be awarded to the runner. The runner shall be awarded only the base he/she is moving to at the time of the throw. EXAMPLE: A player standing on a base or running past first base down the foul line, at the time of the throw, cannot advance to the next base. Runners will advance to the next nearest base on an overthrow including thrown balls that remain in Fair territory. (For example: While a runner is approaching second base, the defending team throws the ball over second base. The umpire will call time and the runner will be awarded 2nd base). The coaches and umpire(s) will concur on what constitutes an overflow at each base prior to the start of the game. No extra bases will be awarded when a ball goes out of play due to poor fence conditions.

## 11. TYPE OF BALL

Team will use a regulation baseball. Any other ball will have to be approved by the board.

## 12. BATS

In addition to wooden bats, metal bats shall be allowed in OBA play. These bats shall meet the dimensional requirements specified in Rule 1:10 of the Official Rules of Baseball. The maximum diameter of the bat barrel is 2 ¾".

13. GAME LENGTH (from the LDBA HL Operating Rules)

<b>Division</b>	<b>Full Game</b>	<b>*Home Leading</b>	<b>*Visitor Leading</b>
Rookie	5 innings	2½ innings	3 innings