

2026 Berks Youth Baseball League Majors Rules

The BYBL rules are outlined below. The fall-back rules set for the BYBL will be NFHS, National Federation of High School. These rules govern School Baseball starting at 7th grade. Anything not addressed in these rules will be governed by the NFHS rules set.

1. Equipment

- a. Metal spikes are not permitted
- b. Bats- USA Baseball marking or wood bats ONLY. Use of an illegal bat will be penalized with these rules:
 - i. The batter is called OUT by the Umpire if he or she steps into the batter's box with an illegal bat
 1. Bat is removed from the game. Use of the bat again will result in the above penalty as well as the Head Coach being ejected from the game
 - ii. If the illegal bat is discovered during an at-bat, the batter will be called out, the bat will be removed from the game & any runners who advanced on the play during the at-bat will return to the last base legally touched by the runners prior to the at-bat beginning
 - iii. If the illegal bat is discovered after the player's at-bat, one of 2 things will happen:
 1. The player will be called out, the bat removed from the game & all runners return to the last base they legally touched prior to the at-bat beginning
 2. Or the Defense can take the result of the play & the bat is removed from the game

2. Games

- a. All games will be 6 innings.
- b. There is a limit of 6 runs per inning except for last inning. **Note** – If a team has scored 5 runs & puts the ball in play for another couple runs, that play needs to be completed for the inning to end. So if 3 runs score after there was 5 already scored in that inning, then the team is awarded all runs scored during that play, it does not revert back to 6.
- c. Time Limit: 1 hour 45 minutes no new inning can start. Umpire has discretion to announce the last inning due to darkness and they have to do it prior to the Top of that inning. If a game is stopped during an inning, the game will revert back to the last completed whole inning for a result.
 - If Coaches agree to play past the time limit, Coaches need to use discretion with relation to darkness & playing on school nights.

2026 Berks Youth Baseball League Majors Rules

- Some Umps may leave after the 1hr 45min time limit & want to call the game. Politely let them know our league allows us to play past the time limit & please thank them for their service & allow them 5 minutes to gather their things & leave the field.
- Place a Volunteer, or the Pitcher's pitching coach, behind the pitching mound to finish the game. It's suggested that each team has a Volunteer call the game from behind their own pitcher so they can perhaps coach the pitcher during the inning.
- If the Coaches agree to & do in fact play longer than the time limit, the game is officially extended. Coaches have to honor their word & complete the game as per their agreement. Cases where a Coach agrees to extend a game, then before the game is over decide that they want to implement the 1hr 45min rule, will be reviewed by the BYBL for possible penalties, including forfeit.

- d. **Mercy Rule:** 15 runs after 4 innings or 10 runs after 5 innings (3-1/2 or 4-1/2 if home team is leading).

(**Note:** By Mutual agreement of both managers the game may be continued for the entire 6 innings, however the outcome as determined by the ten or fifteen run rule will remain unchanged).

- e. **Rescheduling games:** Starting with the 2026 season a protocol was passed regarding games needing to be rescheduled. It's the responsibility of the Coaches to communicate & reschedule the games. The Home field Coach will offer 3 reschedule dates to their opponent. The opponent has to accept 1 of the dates or will forfeit the game to a 6-0 score. There's 3 provisions to this rule:

- Away team cannot already have a game on those dates
- Away team cannot be made to play a 3rd day in a row
- Away team needs to accept a date within 1 week from home team's communication

- f. Games are played on 70ft. base paths with a 50ft. pitching rubber – measured from back tip of home plate to the back edge of the base or pitching rubber.

(Please note some fields may have base paths at 75ft and 53ft pitching mound)

- g. 2 complete innings constitute a complete game. If less than 2 innings has been played the game will be replayed starting from the beginning. Pitches will count for all pitchers even if a game is less than 2 innings & has to be made up/restarted on a subsequent day.

2026 Berks Youth Baseball League Majors Rules

3. Substitutions and Lineup

- a. Bat your entire lineup, free substitutions in the field. All players must bat & play defense.
 - Exception: On teams that have large numbers, the Coach can decide to bat a substitute lineup with free defensive substitutions. NFHS re-entry rules apply.
 - For teams with 14 or more players, teams can bat a minimum of 11 OR the same amount of batters on their opponent's team, whichever is greater.
- b. Entering/Exiting a lineup.
 - Players who are late to a game, or arrive at a game they previously told the coach they were not going to be able to make, and not on the lineup card, FOR ANY REASON, that player will be inserted into the batting order in the last spot.
 - Players who begin the game, and are in the starting lineup, but do not finish the game, or need to exit the game, FOR ANY REASON, will be skipped in the batting order with no penalty.
 - In both cases, arriving late to a game, or leaving early from a game, Teams will NOT take an out for skipping that player in the lineup.

4. Base Running

- a. A courtesy runner can be used at any time, outs are not required, to speed up the game. The courtesy runner must be the player on the roster that made the last out in the inning. If a substitute lineup is being used, the CR will be a player currently on the bench not in the batting lineup.
- b. There shall be a lead line 8 feet from the inside edge of the base. Runners may cross the lead line after the ball leaves the pitcher's hand (leave on release.) Leaving early will result in no pitch being called. After one team warning for leaving early, any subsequent violation on that team will result in the runner being called out.
- c. Head first sliding is an automatic out unless returning from a lead or returning to the base after overrunning the base.
- d. Stealing of all bases, including home, is permitted.
- e. The infield fly rule is in effect. Less than 2 outs with 1st & 2nd or 1st, 2nd & 3rd base occupied.
- f. Batters may attempt first base on a dropped third strike if first base is unoccupied or with 2 outs. Other runners may advance at their own risk. A runner on 1st base stealing does NOT open 1st base. 1st base is considered occupied in this case.

2026 Berks Youth Baseball League Majors Rules

- g. The base runner must slide or avoid contact if there is a potential play at a base or home plate. If, at the umpire's discretion, the runner did not attempt to avoid contact, the runner will be called out.
- h. Delayed stealing is allowed.

5. Pitching

- a. Pitchers are allowed 85 pitches maximum per game.
- b. No intentional curve balls. The judgment of the umpire will be based on the breaking of the wrist during the release of the ball. An illegal pitch will be called, the ball will be dead immediately and the pitch is a ball in the count. Changeups, knuckle balls, 2 seam fast balls, etc... are allowed as long as there is no breaking motion in the mechanic of the Pitcher's delivery.
- c. Once a pitcher has been removed he/she may not re-enter the same game as a pitcher.
- d. No Balks will be called
 - Runners picked off while a Pitcher balks is not an out, despite what the Ump calls. Both Coaches should support fair play
 - If a Pitcher balks on a steal the Runner should be awarded the base they were stealing, despite what the Ump may see & call. Again both Coaches should support fair play & use these instances as teaching opportunities
- e. If a pitcher hits 3 kids in one inning pitcher will need to be removed from pitching the rest of game.
- f. A pitcher must be replaced during the second Coach visit to the mound in the same inning.
- g. The manager must remove the pitcher when said pitcher reaches the limit for his/her pitch count, but the pitcher may remain in the game at another position:
Exception: If a pitcher reaches the limit imposed in Regulation for his league age while facing a batter, the pitcher may continue to pitch until any one of the following conditions occurs: 1. The batter reaches base; 2. That batter is put out; 3. The third out is made to complete the half-inning.
- h. One thrown pitch in an inning constitutes an inning pitched.
- i. A pitcher who delivers 50 or more pitches in a game cannot play the position of catcher for the remainder of that day.
- j. Any player who has played the position of catcher in three or more innings in a game is not eligible to pitch on that calendar day.

2026 Berks Youth Baseball League Majors Rules

k. Pitchers must adhere to the following rest requirements:

- If a player pitches 66 or more pitches in a day, four (4) calendar days of rest must be observed.
- If a player pitches 51-65 pitches in a day, three (3) calendar days of rest must be observed.
- If a player pitches 36-50 pitches in a day, two (2) calendar days of rest must be observed.
- If a player pitches 21-35 pitches in a day, one (1) calendar day of rest must be observed.
- If a player pitches 1-20 pitches in a day, no (0) calendar days of rest is required.
 - **1 days rest refers to 1 whole calendar day of rest.** Example: If a player throws 66, or more, pitches on Monday, that pitcher is not available to pitch again until Saturday. 42 pitches on Monday & a Player is next eligible to pitch Thursday. A Player who pitches 20 or less can pitch again that day, in another game, or the very next day.

l. A Pitch Count Recorder shall be declared by both teams, prior to the game beginning, and keep track of all pitch counts for all pitchers during the game. The official pitch count recorder should inform the umpire-in-chief when a pitcher has delivered his/her maximum limit of pitches for the game, as noted above. The umpire-in-chief will inform the pitcher's manager that the pitcher must be removed. However, the failure by the pitch count recorder to notify the umpire-in-chief, and/or the failure of the umpire-in-chief to notify the manager, does not relieve the manager of his/her responsibility to remove a pitcher when that pitcher is no longer eligible.

- Pitch count recorders are encouraged to match up in between each inning.
- In the event of a discrepancy, the Home Team's Pitch Count Recorder's record shall prevail.
- The pitch count recorder must provide the current pitch count for any pitcher when requested by either manager or any umpire. However, the manager is responsible for knowing when his/her pitcher must be removed.

m. Intentional walks will NOT be permitted.

n. Games that cannot be completed, but will be continued, will still have pitch counts, & # of days rest required, applied to that game.

Ex1: A game is called for darkness/rain but going to be played on the next day. Any Pitcher who exceeded the 20 pitch echelon (& finished a batter

2026 Berks Youth Baseball League Majors Rules

rule) will not be eligible to pitch the next day. Any pitcher who has exited the game is no longer eligible to re-enter that game.

Ex 2: A game is suspended, on Monday, due to darkness/rain & it rains for 2 days so the game is continued on Thursday. The Pitcher of record (the Pitcher actively in the game when it was interrupted) had pitched 48 pitches, & has observed 2 whole days of rest, so that pitcher, as long as they are still the Pitcher of Record, can start fresh with a zero pitch count because they have observed 2 whole days of rest. Any Pitcher who has exited the game still may not re-enter the game, no matter how many days have passed.

6. Hitting

- a. Free bunting is permitted. Once a batter shows bunt, the batter may not attempt a normal swing at the pitch or they will be called out.
- b. Throwing of the bat is not permitted. Teams will be warned once, and subsequent violations will result in the player being called out and possibly ejected from the game.
- c. Dropped Third Strike Rule is in effect. By rule when there are 2 outs or 1st base is unoccupied the dropped 3rd strike is in play. A runner on 1st base stealing on the same play as the dropped 3rd strike does NOT free up 1st base. 1st base is still considered occupied in this case.

7. Playoffs 2026

Playoffs are scheduled to begin Monday June 1st and will be single elimination. We will observe 2 playoff brackets that will culminate in 2 different Championship games & Runner-Ups. Once Regular Season standings are final, we will split the Division into an Upper & a Lower Bracket. The Championship games will be played on Saturday 6/13, Twin Valley will host. Rainouts may push the Championship games into the next week or weekend. Every Majors Division team will make the playoffs. Some teams may observe a Bye in the 1st round to accommodate a proper playoff bracket.

Playoff seeding/standings tie breakers

- Winning Percentage
- Wins (tie is better than a loss)
- Head to Head (2 teams)
- Head to Head Sweep (3 teams)
- Run Differential
- Runs Allowed
- Runs Scored

2026 Berks Youth Baseball League Majors Rules

8. Rosters

- a. Rosters will be comprised of players who reside in the league's district boundaries & are a maximum of 12 years old as of April 30th.
- b. Teams must use only the players on their roster for league games within BYBL.
 - Exception. Regular Season prior to the Roster Deadline. If a Majors team is shorthanded and will have only 9 or less players, they may utilize players from other teams within their Organization, including other Majors teams, to reach a 10 player roster. Including, but not limited to, Diamond Team, Jr.Diamond team, Majors & Minors divisions teams. These players do not need to be on the roster as long as this occurs prior to the Roster Deadline.
- c. Diamond, School & Travel players are allowed to play on an in-house roster, during the regular season as well, & must play 2 regular season games to be eligible for the Final Playoff Roster.
 - These players also have to adhere to the following:
 - Must be age eligible & live within the School District boundaries for their respective Organizations
 - Must be covered by the Organization's insurance policy
 - Adhere to the Roster & Final Playoff Roster requirements
 - Do NOT need to pay the in-house fee
 - The SPIRIT of this rule is for in-house teams to be able to pool players in order to field a team, in the event of player shortages or #s issues an Organization may face.
 - Also to Facilitate a Player who desires to play both Diamond, School or Travel, as well as in-house baseball
 - The SPIRIT of this rule is NOT to bring in a 'ringer(s)' for the playoffs to try & win the league championship
- d. **Final Playoff Roster Deadline: 11:59pm Monday May 18th**. Several weeks before the playoffs are to begin, all Majors BYBL teams will submit their final roster to the league. Only players on their Majors Team roster will be allowed to play in games after the final playoff roster deadline.
- e. No Double Rostered players allowed: Players can only appear on 1 final BYBL roster after the Final Playoff Roster Deadline has occurred. Players playing for multiple teams in the Majors division after the Roster Deadline will be ruled ineligible and will be required to play with the 1st team they played with after the Roster Deadline.
 - Note Double Rostered players do NOT refer to players that play on a Diamond, School or Travel roster. As discussed above these players are eligible. Double Rostered players refers to players not allowed to be on 2 BYBL teams' roster in the same Division.

2026 Berks Youth Baseball League Majors Rules

- f. Rosters can consist of a maximum of 16 players at the Roster Deadline date.
 - g. 13 year olds will be allowed to play in the Majors Division considering the following caveats:
 - 1. Player is still 13 as of April 30th 2023
 - 2. Player does not tryout for Middle School baseball Team
 - 3. Player is cut from the Middle School team
 - 4. Players can be in 7th or 8th grade as long as they meet all criteria
 - 5. Players are not allowed to play in Majors Division if they are on a travel team roster or school roster of any type
 - i. Exception: Players joining a Summer baseball team, at the end of the BYBL season, are eligible to play both for a couple weeks if the two teams overlap.
- 9. Umpires:** Umpire Fees will be split by the competing teams. In cases where the Umpire fee is not an exact increment of \$10, the home team will pay an extra \$5. There will be 1 Umpire for all games except the playoffs Semi-Final & Final games where we will use 2 Umpires. Umpire fees for 2026 regular season are \$75, \$40 home team / \$35 away team. The Umpires will be paid \$80 each for the Semi-Final & Final games.
- 10. Balls:** Home teams will provide balls.