



DOVER BASEBALL CAL RIPKEN MAJORS DIVISION GUIDELINES

Revised: March 2026

The Dover Baseball Association is affiliated with Babe Ruth League, Inc., which includes the Cal Ripken Baseball League. These organizations have adopted the Official Baseball Rules, published by the Commissioner of Baseball, as their primary playing rules. These rules allow for local league modifications to best suit the needs of its players.

The following modifications to the existing national Cal Ripken rules have been generated, and Board approved, with the intent of helping every player reach their full potential in a safe and competitive environment.

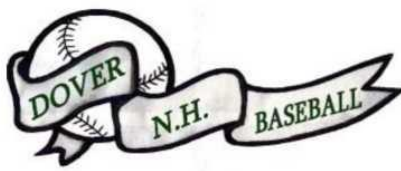
I. Player Eligibility

- A. Players participating in the Major Division must be 11 or 12 years of age by the Babe Ruth designated cut-off date of April 30th.

II. Game Day Rules and Expectations

A. Defining an Inning and Game Length

1. A game is considered complete if any of the following occurs:
 - a. The completion of six innings or two hours of play (no time limit for playoff games), whichever comes first; or
 - b. If the home team is in the lead after the top of the sixth inning; or
 - c. If at the end of the 5th inning either team is ahead by 10 runs or more, 4 ½ innings if the home team is ahead by 10 runs or more; or
 - d. If at the end of the 4th inning either team is ahead by 15 runs or more, 3 ½ innings if the home team is ahead by 15 runs or more.
 - e. Note: If a team is ahead by 20 runs or more before the 3rd inning then the scoreboard shall be turned off.
2. No full inning will start later than two hours past the official start of the game. Coaches and umpires shall agree on the official start time prior to the 1st pitch of the game. Playoff games have no time limit and will be played in full unless the umpire determines it is not safe to continue due to darkness (If a playoff game needs



the lights on during a week night, please call the Division Director and League President for approval).

3. A half-inning is complete once 3 outs have been made.
4. Any game that is suspended by weather or other reason prior to being a complete game (a complete game is 4 innings per Cal Ripken Rules 4.10(c)(1) page 55 in 2024 rule book), shall be picked up where the game was left off. An attempt should be made to suspend a game at the end of a half or full inning if possible. Pitch counts thrown will count towards pitch count restrictions. Any game that is suspended by weather in a ½ inning after 4 will go back to what the score was at the end of the last full inning

B. Umpiring

1. The league will employ at least one umpire for each game.
 - a. The league would prefer the umpire make all calls from behind home plate.

C. Rules of Play

1. There is leading in this division
2. Balks are called in this division (see details in the Pitching Section of these rules)
3. Stealing is allowed at any time
4. Once a batting team is ahead by 8 or more runs, the runner at third is frozen and cannot steal home. They can only score on a bases loaded walk, bases loaded HBP, a balk, or a batted ball.

D. Batting

1. USA Bat Standard: Babe Ruth Rules are to be followed regarding bats. Repeated violation(s) of this rule may subject the team manager to a violation of the Dover Baseball Code of Conduct.
2. A continuous batting order with available players will be established for each game.
3. The Manager will determine the batting line up for each game.
4. A player arriving late will be added to the end of the batting lineup.
5. If a player is unable to bat for any reason, he/she will not be counted as an out.
6. A player hit by a pitch will automatically be awarded 1st base. Players cannot elect



to continue the at bat.

E. Fielding

1. Teams will field the traditional 9 defensive players.
2. Defensive players, with the exception of pitcher, may not be moved during an inning except for an injury or other emergency. The pitcher's defensive switch will be a one-for-one switch.
3. Barring injury, player decision, or player conduct issue, each eligible player must not sit out for more than 2 defensive innings in a given game.
4. Barring a supportable safety concern, previously approved by the division director, each eligible player shall play an infield position for at least 2 defensive innings per game.
5. Sharing Players – From time to time a team may need to share a player from the opposing team. The player selected in a given inning will be the player to make the last out in the previous inning. This player will play an outfield position but will continue to bat for their own team

F. Pitching

1. The BABE RUTH PITCH SMART GUIDELINES shall be followed in any Dover Baseball game and shall apply to pitches thrown outside Dover Baseball as well. All pitchers shall be subject to the following pitch count/rest schedule during regular season:

Maximum Pitches

<u>Per Day</u>	<u>0 Days Rest</u>	<u>1 Day Rest</u>	<u>2 Days Rest</u>	<u>3 Days Rest</u>	<u>4 Days Rest</u>
<u>75 Pitches</u>	<u>1-20</u>	<u>21-35</u>	<u>36-50</u>	<u>51-65</u>	<u>66+</u>

2. Regardless of what league or division the pitches were thrown in, pitchers MUST receive the complete full day(s) of rest required in order to be eligible to pitch in Dover Baseball. For example, if a pitcher throws 50 pitches in either an AAU game or a Dover Baseball game on a Sunday, then he or she must have two (2) full days rest and can't pitch till Wednesday.
3. Managers shall reach a consensus on the number of pitches thrown by each pitcher at the end of each inning and at an individual pitcher's removal from the game. Any disputes shall be resolved with the umpire before leaving the field.
4. Pitch counts shall be recorded and verified by both Managers after each game and then forwarded to the Division Director.



5. Once a pitcher is removed from the mound, they may not re-enter the mound within the same game.
6. Intentional Walks are allowed during the playoffs only. At any point during an at bat, a manager may allow an opposing batter to take first base via intentional walk simply by signaling the umpire. Upon receiving the intentional walk instructions, the umpire shall rule the ball dead and instruct the batter to take first base. No further pitches are required to be thrown to that batter.
7. No pitcher shall appear as a pitcher in three consecutive games, regardless of their pitch counts. This rule is for regular season and the playoffs.
8. Balks will be called but not enforced for the first 3 weeks of the season (please make sure the umpire is aware of this at the pre-game meeting). Then each pitcher will get 1 warning per game before they will be enforced. Balks will be called in playoffs with no warnings.
9. Violation(s): Any violation of the pitching rules may result in game forfeiture and/or other sanctions.
10. **The CAL RIPKEN TOURNAMENT PITCH COUNT RULE shall be in effect for the playoffs & apply to pitches thrown outside Dover Baseball. All pitchers shall follow this pitch count/rest schedule during league playoffs:**

Maximum Pitches

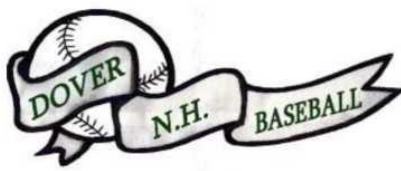
Per Day	0 Day Rest	1 Day Rest	2 Days Rest
85 Pitches	1-40	41-65	66+

G. Player Safety

1. Only the player at bat and the player on deck will have a bat in their hands.
2. All batters and base runners will wear a helmet. They will keep it on from the on-deck area until the time they return to the dugout.
3. All players will wear a protective cup during all games and practices.
4. Players need to keep the dugout openings clear. No standing or sitting in these openings

H. Sportsmanship

1. All players, parents, coaches, spectators, and umpires shall adhere to the Dover Baseball Code of Conduct.



2. Any abuse or violation of the Division Guidelines may be considered a violation of the Code of Conduct.

III. Team Responsibilities - Day of Game

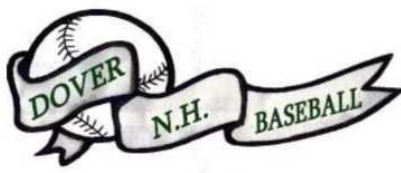
A. Home Team Is:

1. Listed first on the schedule and will use the 1st base dugout;
2. Scheduled to take infield 1/2 hour before game time for ten minutes.
3. Responsible for preparing the field for play; including lining/chalking the field before the game.
4. Responsible for providing volunteers to open and operate the concession stand during games.
5. Responsible for furnishing two brand new league approved game balls. Balls will be provided to teams by Dover Baseball.
6. Responsible for picking up trash in the home dugout, the right field bleachers and emptying trash cans in the home dugout and up the right field line if needed.
7. Responsible for reporting the final score of the game to the Division Director and/or entering the score directly on the Dover Baseball website/mobile app;

B. Visiting Team Is:

1. Listed second on the schedule and will use the 3rd base dugout;
2. Scheduled to take infield practice 15 minutes before the scheduled start of a game for ten minutes;
3. Responsible for maintaining the field after play; including raking the infield, putting away bases, turning off the field lights, and making sure the Scorer's Booth, Dugouts and the equipment shed are locked before leaving the field.
4. Responsible for providing a volunteer to operate the scoreboard
5. Responsible for picking up the trash in the visitor dugout, the left field bleachers and emptying trash cans in the visitor dugout and up the left field line if needed..

C. Both Teams



1. It is the responsibility of the two Managers to confer both during the game and at the end of the game to verify the game score and the pitch counts.
2. Home Team's scorebook is the official scorebook. All scoring disputes should be settled before leaving the field.

IV. All Star and Tournament Teams

A. Player Eligibility

1. Player must be eligible for this league based upon players age; (Birth Certificate Needed)
2. Player must play at least ½ of the regular season games.
3. Must be on a team roster by June 1st.
4. If a player cannot fulfill the 2nd requirement for any reason then he or she will need a letter from the Division Director on their Eligibility Status. Which also needs to be approved by the League President.

B. Manager and Coach Eligibility

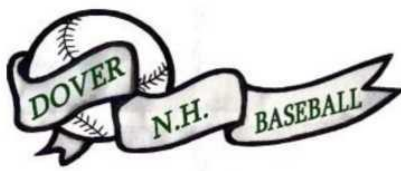
1. All Star and tournament team coaches must be a Manager, Coach or Assistant Coach during the regular season; and
2. Must be on a regular season team roster by June 1st.

V. Division Director Responsibilities

A. Communication

1. The Division Director is responsible for maintaining contact with coaches and parents regarding issues pertaining to the Division.
2. Should assist anyone in need of any equipment before or during the season.
3. The Division Director will have the ability to change the breakdown of games and practices at the beginning of the season. They will have the option of turning the weekday games into practices or scrimmage games.

B. League Standings



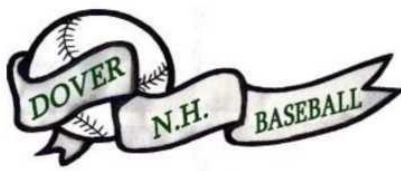
1. The Division Director is responsible for making sure that the website is kept up to date with game results. Scores and standings will be kept solely for the purpose of determining a playoff order. There is no regular season champion in this division.

C. Cancellations and Make-ups

1. The Division Director and/or the VP of Baseball Operations will be responsible for any and all game cancellations. Coaches may not cancel games. Once the first pitch is thrown, then it would be up to the umpire to cancel the game.
2. A game is official after 4 innings.
3. An attempt should be made to make up all games cancelled.
4. All make-up games must be rescheduled through the Division Director

D. Player Call-Ups and Roster Shortages

1. The Division Director will maintain a fill-in players list from within the major's division who wish to play more baseball on other teams in the division. The list should be created at the beginning of the season. The Minor Division Director will maintain a Call-Up list of the names of players from the Cal Ripken Minor Division who are deemed capable of playing up in the Cal Ripken Major Division.
2. When a coach becomes aware that he/she will not have 9 players for a given game they must contact the Cal Ripken Major Division Director. The Division Director will determine if substitute players will be obtained from other teams within the division or from the Minor Division. Coaches may not find their own fill in players.
3. For Substitute players from within the division:
 - a. Players can play any position on the field except pitcher.
 - b. They bat last in your lineup and cannot sit out more than 2 defensive innings.
 - c. Cal Ripken Majors Division players who have a scheduled game or practice at the same time are not eligible to be fill in players.
 - d. It is the Responsibility of the Majors Division Director to inform both team coaches who the player is.
4. For substitute players from the Minors division:
 - a. These players will be placed on the list by the Cal Ripken Minor Division Director.
 - b. The Cal Ripken Major Division Director will contact the Cal Ripken Minor Division Director for a Call-up player. The Cal Ripken Minor Division



Director will contact players from the Call-Up list to fill the vacant roster spots. Coaches may not find their own players.

- c. Cal Ripken Minor Division players who have a scheduled game or practice at the same time are not eligible to be a call up player in the Cal Ripken Major Division.
- d. The Cal Ripken Minor Division Director will inform the Cal Ripken Major Division Director of who the player is. It will be the responsibility of the Cal Ripken Major Division Director to inform both teams' coaches with the names of the players that will be playing up.
- e. If a player is called-up they become eligible for the game and will play under the following conditions:
 - i. They must not sit out for more than 2 defensive innings in the game;
 - ii. They will bat last in the order; and
 - iii. They may field any position except pitcher or catcher.

V. Parent Responsibility

A. Communication

1. It is the parent's responsibility to communicate with Managers and Coaches the number of pitches their child has thrown in another league, so as to not put the child or the team at risk of either injury or of violating the pitching rules within Dover Baseball.
2. It is the parent's responsibility to make the coach aware of games or practices in which their child will not be able to attend.
3. It is the parent's responsibility to communicate with the Managers, Coaches, Division Directors, or any board member concerns they may have.
4. It is the parent's responsibility to adhere to the Dover Baseball's Code of Conduct policy. Please go over the Code of Conduct policy with your player as well.

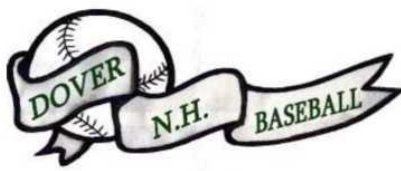
B. Concession Stand Coverage

1. Each family shall be responsible for covering the concession stand for at least one game during the course of the season.

VI. Coaching and Player Development

A. Weekly Field Time

1. Weekly field time should include 1-2 practices per week, with 2-3 games each. Games will be played on Keays Field and Sullivan Field. Practices will be on



Keays, or Sullivan. This breakdown of games and practices may be subject to change at the Division Director's discretion.

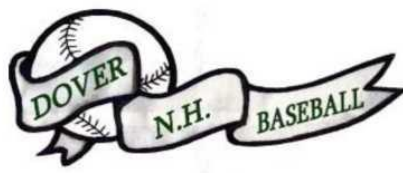
B. Player Development Expectations

By the end of the Major League season players should be consistently demonstrating knowledge of:

1. Field set-up and base-running concepts:
 - Defensive positioning and reading the ball off the bat
 - Knowledge of individual speed versus the speed and arm strength of the fielders
 - Situational base running (i.e., stealing, extra bases, hit and run, pick up base coach early)
2. Fielding concepts:
 - Positional play depending on the batter;
 - The fielding responsibilities of the positions; ie. The 2nd baseman covers second on balls hit to the left side or center field, and cuts off the throws from the right fielder.
 - An awareness of base runners when fielding and throwing a ball
 - Players should be developing an understanding of game time situations
3. Basic hitting concepts and hitting safety:
 - Stance and swing;
 - Plate awareness and pitch selection
 - Bat control and ability to hit to either side of the field;
 - Ability to bunt consistently;
4. Basic Individual Catching and Throwing Technique:
 - Using two hands to catch the ball;
 - Ability to quickly transfer ball from glove to hand;
 - Throwing from potentially awkward positions;
 - Body awareness while throwing the ball;
 - Consistent throwing motion with emphasis on accuracy;

****FINAL NOTE****

The game of baseball is just that, A GAME! Mistakes will be made. There will be fielding mistakes; there will be coaching mistakes; and there will be umpiring mistakes. But there should not be mistakes in behavior.



It is the objective of the Dover Baseball Association to teach the game of baseball and to implant firmly in the children of the community the ideals of good sportsmanship, honesty, loyalty, courage, and respect for authority, so that they may be well adjusted, stronger, and happier children and will grow to be good, decent, healthy, and trustworthy citizens. This objective can only be reached with the help of all; players, coaches and spectators alike! Dover Baseball has developed a Code of Conduct Policy that is intended to serve as a means of helping us meet this objective.

The policy can be found on the association website, <http://www.dovernhbaseball.org/>



HOME PLATE MEETING

Items to be discussed with umpires before Dover Baseball league games:

Keays Field:

- Continuous batting order – bat all available players at a given game.
- Open substitutions – defensive substitutions can be made freely in between innings. Pitcher is the only position that can be changed during an inning. Unless there is an injury or other emergency situation.
- Home team keeps the official scorebook.
- Pitch counts are handled between the head coaches and should be communicated throughout the games
- There are balks called in this division. Balks will be called but not enforced for the first 3 weeks of the season. Then
- each pitcher will get 1 warning per game before they will be enforced. Balks will be called in playoffs with no warnings.
- Runners are locked down at 3rd base when a team is ahead by 8 or more runs.
- Run Rule – 10 runs after 5 innings (or 4 ½ innings), 15 runs after 4 (or 3/12)
- No new inning can start after 2 hours from the start of the game. The start time will be agreed upon at the home plate meeting. There is no time limit during playoffs.
- Lights can be turned on during weekday playoff games with Division Director and League President approval.
- Ground rules:
 - Face of dugouts is - in play
 - Wood above dugouts and openings of the dugouts are – out of play
 - Opening under gate in right field and opening under gate down the left field line are – out of play

Sullivan Field:

- Continuous batting order – bat all available players at a given game.
- Open substitutions – defensive substitutions can be made freely in between innings. Pitcher is the only position that can be changed during an inning. Unless there is an injury or other emergency situation.
- Home team keeps the official scorebook.
- Pitch counts are handled between the head coaches and should be communicated throughout the games
- There are balks called in this division. Balks will be called but not enforced for the first 3 weeks of the season. Then
- each pitcher will get 1 warning per game before they will be enforced. Balks will be called in playoffs with no warnings.



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- Run Rule – 10 runs after 5 innings (or 4 ½ innings), 15 runs after 4 (or 3/12)
- No new inning can start after 2 hours from the start of the game. The start time will be agreed upon at the home plate meeting. There is no time limit during playoffs.
- Ground rules:
 - Face if dugouts is – in play
 - Wood above dugouts and openings of the dugouts are – out of play
 - Opening under gate in right field and opening under gate down the left field line are – out of play