

2026 Tri-County Youth Conference Baseball Rules

Tri-County Baseball

	Distance		Game		Ball Size	Max Run/inn	Bat Rule
	Pitching	Bases	Inning	Time			
Pony	54'	80'	7	1:45	9"	10	IESA
Bronco	50'	70'	7	1:45	9"	10	n/a
Mustang	46'	60'	6	1:30	9"	5	n/a
Pinto	coach	60'	min 2	1:30	9"	n/a	n/a
Shetland	coach	60'	min 2	1:30	RIFF5	n/a	n/a

Pony Division Rules - Revised April 2025

A. Prior to the start of the game, the coaches shall meet at home plate to discuss TRI-COUNTY rules and any ground rules for the diamond.

B. There shall be every attempt to have 2 paid patched umpires. If every attempt is exhausted, the game can be played with one patched and one paid and educated base umpire at the age of 16 or older or 1 patched umpire behind wither the plate or the mound (umpire's choice).

C. The home team shall provide one new leather ball and 1 quality used leather ball for the game to be handed to the umpire at the home plate meeting.

D. A minimum of 8 players are required to start the game. Any less than eight players at the scheduled start time are considered a forfeit. Forfeits will result in a final score of 1 run/inning of the game to zero. When playing with 8, an out is recorded every time the 9th (or missing person's) batting slot is due up to bat.

E. Each player must play a minimum of two full innings, except in the event of an injury.

F. Re-entry rule is in effect (The pitcher may not be removed from the mound and then re-enter the pitching position).

G. If the player is hurt or removed from the game, just skip his at bat with no out recorded.

H. For regular season games, a team can pick up a player from another team to play for their team in their division or from below their division if they only have 8 players or fewer players. The player must be on the town's roster. The picked-up players may not pitch and must bat last in the line-up. Clarification that you may only borrow until you have 10 players available for the game 9 required + 1 extra.

I. For tournaments, for towns not on gamechanger rosters must be submitted 1 week before the tournament to the Tri-County for review. A player can only be listed on one roster and play on one team during tournament. For any team that is short players they must bring kids up from division below.

J. Run rule is in effect when a team is ahead by fifteen runs after three innings; twelve runs after four innings; ten runs after five innings.

K. The catchers must wear full gear. This includes a helmet and facemask, chest protector, and shin guards. If warming up a pitcher between innings, a helmet and facemask must be worn.

L. There will be nine players on the field in a game; three of these must start at least 10 feet behind the base path for each batter.

M. Dropped 3rd strike and infield fly rules apply. If a dropped 3rd strike occurs and the batter does not make an obvious attempt for first base but exits the box and heads towards their team's dugout/bench, that batter is considered an out. If an infield fly occurs and the umpire(s) do not call it, all players on the field (offense and defense) are expected to play the ball live.

N. Once a pitcher has hit three batters within one inning, they will be relieved of the pitching position for the rest of the game.

O. Runners must slide into home if there is a play at the plate. It is at the umpire's discretion if the ball is considered playable for play at plate.

P. Catchers must give a clear path/alley to the home plate.

Intentional blocking/contact at the plate during a play will result in the runner being called safe, and a warning will be issued to both the catcher and their coach/team.

Q. All players will bat, even those not playing the field.

R. IESA bat rules apply. Legal bats are:

--Any non-wood bat containing a silkscreened or permanently marked BBCOR label as detailed in the section 1-3-2 of the NFHS baseball rules book or:

-- Any bat 30 inches and under that has a greater than minus three drop and a barrel diameter of 2 5/8 inches if bat contains the USA Baseball logo or:

--Any wood bat that meets the NFHS standards as detailed in sections 1-3-2 and 1-3-3 of the NFHS baseball rules book.

Note 1: bats 31 inches and over must meet the NFHS bat guidelines and contain the BBCOR label. Or be an approved wood bat.

Note 2: All bats with a 2 ¼” barrel diameter are illegal.

Note 3: Any bat with a USSSA logo is illegal.

S. Coaches are required follow the Pitch Smart Guidelines as follows:

AGE	DAILY MAX (PITCHES IN GAME)	REQUIRED REST (PITCHES)					
		0 Days	1 Days	2 Days	3 Days	4 Days	5 Days
7-8	50	1-20	21-35	36-50	N/A	N/A	N/A
9-10	75	1-20	21-35	36-50	51-65	66+	N/A
11-12	85	1-20	21-35	36-50	51-65	66+	N/A
13-14	95	1-20	21-35	36-50	51-65	66+	N/A
15-16	95	1-30	31-45	46-60	61-75	76+	N/A
17-18	105	1-30	31-45	46-60	61-80	81+	N/A
19-22	120	1-30	31-45	46-60	61-80	81-105	106+

T. Except for the rules listed on this sheet all other IESA rules apply.

U. All players must have team uniform on. Uniforms for other teams are not permitted and players will not be allowed to play.

V. No players over the age of 16 will be permitted to pitch in Tri-County Pony Leagues.

Bronco Division Rules additional exceptions (in addition to all the rules above)

- A. Metal spikes are not permitted.
- B. Each new pitcher gets 2 balk warnings before a real balk will be called.
- C. No bat restrictions for Bronco (all USA, BBCOR, USSSA, approved wood bats are legal) see table above. List Bronco and below as n/a.

Mustang Division Rules additional exceptions (in addition to all the rules above)

- A. No balks, but umpires/coaches are encouraged to utilize such situations as teaching moments. This should not occur with there being no leadoffs.
- B. There shall be a minimum of one patched umpire behind the plate or mound. Preferably behind the plate.
- C. There will be a maximum of ten players on the field. Four of these must start at least 10 feet behind the basepath for each batter.
- D. Dropped 3rd strike rule and infield fly rule do not apply.
- E. No intentional bunting. An intentional bunt is a dead ball out for the batter.
- F. Base stealing is allowed with the following rules:
 - A: No lead offs.
 - B: Runners may advance only one base per pitch and cannot leave the base until the ball crosses home plate.
 - C: Runners may not steal home. Runners can only be hit home or by walk (or hit batter) with bases loaded.

- G. A maximum of 5 runs per inning. After 5 runs the inning is over for that team.
- H. No bat restrictions for Mustang (all USA, BBCOR, USSSA, approved wood bats are legal) see table above.

Pinto Division Rules additional exceptions (in addition to all the rules above)

- A. All players play in the field. There will be five infielders as follows: pitcher, 1st base, 2nd base, 3rd base, and shortstop. The rest of the players will play outfield and will be 10ft. behind the base path before each batter. A catcher is optional.
- B. Two defensive coaches may be in the field to “coach” fielders. An additional coach should back up the catchers after the pitches to speed up the game.
- C. Players must play a different position each inning.
- D. Base coaches shall be the umpire first and third base. Pitcher will umpire second and home.
- E. No score is kept.
- F. All players bat each inning unless three fielding outs have been made. (strike outs do not count as fielding outs)
- G. If one team has more players than the other, the team with fewer batters will bat extra players to have the same number of batters as the larger team.
- H. Players cannot receive a “base on balls” (walk)
- I. The offensive team will provide their own coach to pitch to their own hitters: they will also provide 2 other coaches, one coaching at first and one coaching at third.
- J. When a ball is hit into the outfield, the runners may advance until the ball is touched by an infielder on a return throw: at

- that point in time, if the runner is not halfway to the base he must return to the previous base.
- K. Runners may not advance on an overthrow.
 - L. No base stealing is allowed. Runners may leave base when the bat hits the ball.
 - M. Four strikes or eight pitches are allowed. If a foul ball occurs on the fourth strike, he will receive another pitch.
 - N. As a courtesy, please allow all runners to cross home plate before the defense exits the field.

Shetland Division Rules additional exceptions (in addition to all the rules above)

- A. The coach will pitch 4 pitches to each batter. The tee be used for any batter if he doesn't get a hit on 4 pitches.
- B. All batters hit through each inning as no outs were recorded.