

7th & 8th Grade SWCL Youth Baseball Rules

WIAA RULES WILL BE USED EXCEPT FOR CHANGES LISTED BELOW

1) FIELD

- a)** Pitching Distance: 55 feet from the back of home plate to the front of the pitching plate.
- b)** Bases: 80 Feet
- c)** Outfield Fence: An outfield fence is not required for league games. However, an outfield fence is required to host the SWCL League Tournament.
 - (1) Pitching mounds can be used if HOME team would like. Home team must communicate to opposing team if that is occurring. **Homemade mounds will not be allowed.**
- d)** All Extra rubber mounds must be removed.

2) EQUIPMENT

- a)** Helmets
 - (1) When outside the dugout, all members of the batting team must wear a helmet.
 - (2) The first time a player of the team at bat is caught outside the dugout without a helmet the team will be warned, each time after the team will be assessed an out.
- b)** Catcher Gear
 - (1) Throat guard, mask, chest protector, cup, **shin guards**, and helmet are required equipment for catchers.
- c)** Footwear
 - (1) Metal cleats are prohibited.
- d)** Bats
 - (1) BBCOR .50 or USA Baseball approved. Maximum of 2 5/8" diameter.
 - (2) Maximum of 2 1/4" diameter. (ILLEGAL STARTING 2021)
 - (3) All bats may not exceed 34 inches in length.
 - (4) Wood bats must be made of a single piece of wood.
 - (5) Handles may be roughened or wound with tape not more than 18 inches from the handle end.
 - (6) If a NON-APPROVED/ILLEGAL bat is brought to the batter's box
 - (a) First offense: GAME IS FORFEITED and PLAYER IS SUSPENDED FOR NEXT GAME-WE RECOMMEND FINISHING GAME (we want to see kids play, the player)
 - Second offense: TEAM FORFEITS THE LEAGUE TOURNAMENT
 - (b) ****All offenses must be reported to League Commissioner.**
 - (c) The board will report this suspension to the next games head coach.
- e)** Balls
 - (1) Must be Little League, Senior League or Babe Ruth approved.
 - (2) Balls marked or stamped "Official League" are not acceptable.
 - (3) The home team is responsible for providing one new ball and one good spare.
- f)** Player Number
 - (1) All players must have a number on their uniform/shirt.

3) GAME

- a)** Games will be played at 6pm and 7:30pm unless agreed on by coaches.
 - i)** Fields that do not have lights will have no game starting after 6pm
- b)** Length of Game: 7 innings. If tied, continue to play until the tie is broken (If less than 2 hours). The last out from previous inning will start at 2nd base in each extra inning played.

- (1) **2-hour time limit.**
- (2) No **NEW** inning may start after 2 hours from start of the game.
- (3) The NEW inning starts immediately after last out of previous inning. Once an inning has started the inning must be completed if the home team is behind.
- (4) Games tied after time limit is imposed are recorded as a tie.
- c) Mercy Rule: 10 run rule starts in the 5th inning after the team that is behind has batted. *Scoring stops after the play that puts home team up by 10 or more runs.*
- d) Number of players allowed on defense:
 - (1) 9 players (the team may start with 8 players but forfeits with less than 8 players).
 - (2) No out will be assessed for the 9th position of the batting order if a team only has 8 players. ii. May add late players to end of batting order without penalty.
- e) Batting the bench: Coaches have options – See Section 5 Substitution
- f) Teams can bat the entire bench in all league games/tournament games.
- g) Injuries:
 - i) If injury occurs during a play, last out can run for injured player one time
 - ii) If using subs you may follow the substitution rule.
 - iii) If substitutions have all been used, you must take an out at the injured players next at bat.
 - iv) If you are batting the bench, the line up condenses and no out is taken.
 - v) No-Re-Entry of injured player
- h) Infield Fly: Infield fly will be called with runners on first and second or bases loaded with less than two outs.
- i) Team MUST stay in their designated dugout during the duration of the game.
- j) Taunting players or teams is STRICTLY prohibited and may be subject to disciplinary actions.
- k) Game Delays:
 - (1) Lightening delay is 30 Minutes
 - (2) If a game ends early due to darkness or weather, the game is considered complete if 4 1/2 innings are complete and the home team is ahead, or 5 innings are complete, and the visiting team is ahead.
- l) Rescheduling of Game
 - (1) Both teams must make an effort to reschedule the game.
 - (2) Games not completed by end of season will be scored as a tie.
 - (3) Games cancelled for reasons other than weather, the requesting team will be responsible for a makeup date suitable with the opposing team or forfeit the game.
 - (4) Forfeited games are recorded as a 7-0 win
- m) Communities will not play each other in regular season. UNLESS a community has 3 or more teams in one age group.
- n) The umpire's decision is final – no protesting of the game.

4) **RUNNER**

- a) Sliding
 - (1) Runners must slide or avoid contact when there is a play at any base and home plate, or he will be called out.
 - (2) A play is defined as the defender having control of the ball and attempting to tag the runner out.
 - (3) If the defender does not have control of the ball, the runner must still avoid MALICIOUS contact.
 - (4) *If the runner is put out due to avoiding a defender without control of the ball, the umpire may call the runner safe due to obstruction.*
- b) Home Plate
 - (1) **HOME PLATE IS OPEN IN ALL LIVE BALL SITUATIONS**

5) BATTER

a) Dropped 3rd Strike

- (1) The batter may attempt to advance to 1st base on a dropped third strike if: 1st base is unoccupied at the beginning of the pitch and there are less than two outs or ii. 1st base is occupied or unoccupied with 2 outs.

b) Bunting is allowed.

c) Slashing is not permitted.

- (1) a batter may not show bunt, pull back and swing at a pitch.
- (2) If the batter shows bunt and then attempts to swing the ump shall immediately call “dead ball” and issue a strike.
- (3) If the same or another player slashes, the umpire shall immediately call “dead ball” and the batter will be out.

d) The batter must call time if he needs to talk to his coach.

e) SUBSTITUTION *No Designated Hitters (DH)*****

f) Batting the Bench:

- (1) Coaches have the option of batting their bench.
- (2) The batting order must remain the same for the entire game.
- (3) Players can substitute defensively freely without the need to report.

g) Teams Choosing to Bat 9 Players and Substitute:

- (1) Starters: May reenter the game twice but must be in the same batting order.
- (2) Substitutions: May reenter the game once but must be in the same batting order.
- (3) If player subs into bat, he must play 1 inning of defense. If he subs in on defense, he must stay in until he bats once.

h) Reporting:

- (1) When a coach elects not to bat the bench, the home plate umpire and opposing team record keeper must be notified by the coach or record keeper of every substitution and reentry prior to the player taking the field on defense or attempting an at bat.

i) Courtesy runner:

- (1) Courtesy runner(s) may be used for the player(s) pitching and/or catching the previous half inning.
- (2) When there are one or two outs.
- (3) The player making the last out must be the courtesy runner.
- (4) A pitcher and/or catcher receiving a courtesy runner must return in the following half inning as the pitcher or catcher.

6) PITCHER

a) Pitchers are limited to 5 warm up pitches between innings.

b) A player can pitch no more than 4 innings in a game.

- (1) One pitch to a batter is considered an inning.

c) Non-consecutive Innings:

- (1) A pitcher can be taken out of the game and return as a pitcher *ONCE* per game, e.g. a pitcher may pitch the 1, 2, 3 and 7th innings or 1, 2, 6, and 7th innings or similar.

d) A pitcher hitting three batters in a game must be removed and may not return as the pitcher.

e) No balks: The umpire will call a “no pitch” if a pitcher commits a balk.

- (1) e.g., pitches without coming to a complete pause (aka quick pitching), pitcher drops the ball while his pivot foot is in contact with the pitching plate and runner(s) are on base.

(2) 1st Balk-warning, no advancement.

(3) 2nd Balk-WIAA Rules apply

f) A pitcher does not have to pitch to the batter for an intentional walk. The coach, pitcher, or catcher may request a walk.

g) Catchers cannot come into pitch unless there is an injury.

(1) a catcher cannot come into pitch within the same inning unless there is an injury. If a player is not catching that inning, they can pitch.

h) A pitcher may wear sunglasses (unless obvious glare affects umpires' vision)

7) PLAYER ELIGIBILITY

a) Each team can have a maximum of 2 players from outside the team's community or school attended.

i) The board needs to be petitioned by assigned date for approval of these changes.

b) Rosters need to be completed and submitted to Baseball VP by determined date.

(1) Roster forms can be found on the SWCL website. Forms need to include players full name, jersey number, grade completed, school attended, shirt size.

(2) Any alterations to rosters must be submitted to the Baseball VP prior to game.

c) Players are only allowed to play on one team in each division (3/4,5/6,7/8) Players are not allowed to play both softball and baseball.

d) Players are not prohibited from playing in other organized youth baseball programs e.g., Cal Ripken.

e) A player playing on more than one team of the same age group, e.g. 5th/6th and 5th/6th, or playing on a younger team, e.g. a 7th/8th grade player playing on a 5th/6th grade team, is strictly prohibited.

(1) Game(s) will be forfeited.

8) RECORD KEEPING

a) Teams must keep complete/accurate record for each game. Teams may use a scorebook or any electronic form of scorekeeping. The SWCL board may request access to any form or scorekeeping at any point of the season and will be granted that access or a forfeit of the game(s) in question. *Coaches must verify final score with opponent.*

b) Records need to include (at minimum):

(1) Players' full name

(2) Players' uniform number

(3) Number of runs scored by each team.

(4) Number of innings each pitcher pitched.

c) The winning team needs to report scores on our website (SWCL.org). Failure to report the score of a game will result in a forfeit by each team. Coaches should verify final score and sign opponent's book. Any team with 2 or more unreported scores by the deadline, the current head coach will not be allowed to coach the next year unless a \$150 fine is paid to the SWCL.

d) Teams participating in the SWCL Tournament need to be able to produce their full set of game records from all SWCL league games and present them to the league, if requested.

9) OFFICIATING

a) Umpire Qualifications

(1) League Games

(a) The home plate and base umpires must be high school age (at least 15 years old).

(b) The home team is responsible for providing the home plate and base umpires.

(c) Plate umpire is required to wear shin guards, chest protector, face mask, and close toed shoes.

(d) Plate umpire is to print name on both team score books.

10) SWCL League Tournament

- a) Players must have played in at least 50% of their teams SWCL games during the SWCL regular season to participate in the SWCL Tournament.
 - (1) Exemption: If a player is injured (e.g., broken arm, etc.) and is unable to play and travels with his team he may participate in the league tournament.
- b) The SWCL Board will make the final decision whether a player is eligibility.
- c) Seeding of the Tournament
 - i) Tie breaker for teams with same record in each division.
 - (1) Head-to-head
 - (2) Winning %
 - (3) Runs allowed
 - (4) Run Differential
 - (5) Flip of a coin
 - ii) Seeding Teams for the Tournament Bracket
 - (1) Division winners are seeded 1-4, Second teams seeded 5-8, Third teams seeded 9-12, Fourth teams seeded 13-16
 - (a) Seeding determined using the following criteria
 - (i) Winning %
 - (ii) Runs allowed
 - (iii) Run Differential
 - (iv) Flip of a coin
- d) The location of games
 - (1) Monday through Wednesday at the higher seed location.
 - (2) Thursday Night Winners bracket will be played at the host site. Losers Bracket will be played at the higher seed location.
 - (3) All games will be played at the host site Friday and Saturday.
- e) Home team
 - (1) The higher seed will be home team.
 - ii) Championship Game:
 - (1) Undefeated team will get home field advantage
 - (a) If second game is needed, higher seed team get will get home field advantage.
- f) **Must bat at least 9 players.** (Take an out for missing 9th batter) no penalty for legitimate injury during game.
- g) Balls: Must be Little League, Senior League, Babe Ruth or NFHS approved.
 - (1) Monday through Wednesday the home team is responsible for providing one new ball and one good spare.
 - (2) Thursday, Friday, and Saturday the tournament host will provide one new and two good spares for each game.
- h) Games do not have a time limit.
 - (1) Games will be completed to 7 innings if rain delay/rainout. (unless 10 run rule applies)
- i) If the game is tied after 7 innings of play.
 - (1) The last player that made an out, from both teams, will be placed on 2nd base at the beginning of their half of the 7th inning and any necessary innings.
 - (2) The last out will continue to be placed on 2nd base until an extra inning ends without a tie.
 - (3) Pitcher earn extra innings in extra innings played. No consecutive innings. Pitch 1, Rest 1
 - (a) Ex. If pitching 4,5,6 innings pitcher can not pitch again until the 8th inning
- j) Compensation from SWCL: The host site will receive \$150 per game starting Thursday.

(1) The home plate umpire at the host site must be WIAA Certified Thursday, Friday, and Saturday.

k) Pitchers may pitch a maximum of 8 innings per day.

l) Regular season pitching game rules, see #6, Pitching

m) ***NO BALK WARNING IN TOURNAMENT GAMES.***