



North Shore Baseball Association

9U Division Rules

PURPOSE

The objective of the 9U Division program is to get young players interested in baseball by stressing and maintaining active participation of all players with an emphasis on teaching the fundamentals of baseball in a fun and safe environment. These rules are intended to provide a framework to achieve this objective, and should be interpreted and applied in a manner that is consistent with this objective.

1. GENERAL RULES

- a. Full uniform and hats that are supplied by the league should be worn to all games - shirts are to be tucked in. All players must wear athletic supporters. Base runners, batter, and on-deck batter must wear batting helmets with chinstraps properly attached. Players may wear running shoes or molded rubber cleats.
- b. Each team is responsible to clean up their dugout after the game.
- c. The Home team is responsible to prepare the diamond, line the field and fill in any depressions before the game. After the game they are to rake the infield, home plate and pitching mound areas and make sure all equipment used during the game is returned to the bins and locked up. Care should be taken to store the gear in a safe way in the bin. If gear is damaged it may not be replaced. Bases and pitching machine should be left in place when another game follows immediately afterwards and locked up otherwise. No children are allowed in equipment rooms or bins.
- d. The Home team occupies the dugout behind third base.
- e. Before a game, each Head Coach must give a copy of his batting line-up to the opposing team and the home plate Umpire. The home team should hand over their line-up first.
- f. Coaches are to make notes on Umpires performances (both plate and field) and forward to the Umpire-In-Chief or Umpire Coordinator with any pointers that can help their future games. Coaches are not to provide any feedback to umpires during games. BC Minor Baseball Rule 13.11.2 is in effect and

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- governs all interactions with umpires. Failure to strictly adhere to this rule may lead to significant discipline including ejection and/or suspension.
- g. During a game, Coaches or parents cannot position themselves on the outside of the backstop behind the Umpire in order to coach the team. During game play, defensive coaches may go on the playing field but should remain in foul territory near their dugout or past their dugout towards the outfield. Exceptions will be permitted during the first part of the season to the extent necessary but in any event, Coaches should ensure that they do not interfere with or otherwise influence any play.
 - h. Coaches are responsible for the behaviour of their team players, fans and parents during games, and to make sure that there is no abuse of equipment.
 - i. A 9U player may be called up to play on a 11U team a maximum of 3 games plus 1 tournament. The 9U and 11U Coordinators plus the player's Coach must be notified of the name of the player being called up, to ensure that the player is eligible to be called up. The player must receive the same treatment as regular players, must not play more innings than a regular team player and must not pitch.

2. STARTING AND ENDING THE GAME

- a. Games must start within 15 minutes of the scheduled start time.
- b. It is solely the Umpire's discretion when to call the game due to darkness, or field or weather conditions. Games which have recorded 3 complete innings, or 2.5 innings with the home team in the lead before the end of the bottom of the 3rd, will be considered complete games.
- c. The objective is that games should last no longer than 1 hour and 30 minutes from the time of the first pitch. To achieve this objective, unless both Coaches and the umpire agree, no new innings should begin after 1 hour and 15 minutes from the time of the first pitch.
- d. Games which are not completed and are postponed due to field or weather conditions will be rescheduled by the division coordinator, if there is time available in the schedule.

3. PLAYING FIELD

- a. Bases shall be 60 feet apart and where available, shall be held by a base spike to avoid injury. The pitching machine is to be set up at the pitching rubber. To the extent possible, the pitching rubber will be set at the 42-foot mark.
- b. For fields without an outfield fence, the edge of the outfield will be marked with cones placed on an arc between the left and right field foul lines. There

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- is no mandatory field size but as a guideline the cones on the left and right field foul lines should be approximately 150 feet from home plate and the cone at centre field should be approximately 175 feet from home plate.
- c. The batter's box is to be 3 feet wide x 6 feet long and the inside line 6" away from the side of the plate. It shall extend 3 feet in front of and 3 feet behind the centre of the plate. There should be metal or wooden guides available at each diamond to assist in forming the batter's box.

4. GAME RULES

- a. The length of a 9U game shall be as follows (all subject to game length described above):
- Beginning of season to end of 2nd week of games - maximum 4 innings
4 machine pitch innings (4 run max)
 - 3rd week to end of 4th week - 4 innings or if agreed by both coaches, 5 innings
1 player pitch inning at start of game (2 run max)
3 machine pitch innings (or 4 where playing 5 inning game) (4 run max)
 - 5th week to end of 6th week – 5 innings
2 player pitch innings at start of game (2 run max)
3 machine pitch innings (4 run max)
 - 7th week to end of season – 5 innings
3 player pitch innings at start of game (2 run max)
2 machine pitch innings (4 run max)
 - Playoffs – 5 innings
3 player pitch innings (2 run max) at start of game
3 machine pitch innings (4 run max, with last inning "open" to a max of 10 runs)
Last inning must be agreed and declared in advance, unless it is the 5th inning.
- b. In the event of condition or time constraints, 3 complete innings, or 2.5 complete innings with the home team leading, or gaining the lead in the bottom of the 3rd, shall constitute a complete game.
- c. A team's turn at bat will consist of 3 outs or when the run limit has been met for the inning.
- d. Score is kept at this level. If a game is a tie at the end of the game, it will remain a tie (except in the case of a playoff game where rules to resolve

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- ties may be adopted). There is no mercy rule in this division as the goal is to get as much play time for all players as possible.
- e. All players will be included in the batting order. Players will be listed in the order they are to bat. Players arriving late will be added to the end of the batting order. In the regular season, players may be added to the batting order at any time. During playoffs, any player not present by their first at bat will be removed from the line up and not permitted to enter the game.
 - f. A maximum of 10 players allowed on the field per inning. The 10th player must play an outfield position. The outfielders should not overtake an infielder's position, instead they should be taught to cover behind the play.
 - g. No player can play more than 2 innings in the same position in 1 game, with the exception of the Catcher, who may play 3 innings. Also, for the development of players, all players must play the infield for a minimum of 2 innings and outfield for a minimum of 1 inning per game.
 - h. All players must sit 1 inning before a player can sit a second inning and no player can sit more than 2 innings per game except for disciplinary reasons. The Coach should inform the Umpire and the Coach of the opposing team of any disciplinary actions or if a player must leave the game early for any reason.
 - i. Players are allowed 3 strikes as per standard baseball rules. Each pitch delivered by the pitching machine is considered a strike unless the machine produces an obviously wild pitch: this will be decided by the Umpire and will not be called a strike. Unlimited foul balls are allowed. The batter will be called "out" if after 2 strikes the player leaves the next pitch, or swings and misses the next pitched ball cleanly. When the pitching machine is being used, there will be no "walks". During pitcher innings when a batter has 4 pitches ruled to be "Balls", the batter will start the play by hitting the ball from home plate off a tee.
 - j. A coach or parent will operate the pitching machine (no players).
 - k. The front two feet of the pitching machine should be dug in behind the pitching rubber (which shall, to the extent possible, be set at the 42-foot mark). The speed of the pitching machine must be agreed upon by the Coaches of both teams. Unless agreed by both Coaches, the pitching machine cannot be altered in speed or position until the end of each inning.
 - l. The offensive team will operate the pitching machine. The ball must be held up before putting it into the machine so that the batter and the Catcher know the ball is coming. The Pitcher must hand the ball to the pitching machine operator. On a live play, the pitching machine operator cannot communicate with the base runners but can communicate with the hitter.

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- m. If a batted ball hits the machine or machine operator, it is ruled a "dead ball" and the batter gets a base. The base runners advance 1 base only. If a hit ball hits the cord of the pitching machine (if applicable) it is a "live ball". If a thrown ball hits the pitching machine during "live play" then the ball is ruled a "dead ball" and each base runner including the batter advances 1 base.
- n. If the throw that hits the machine is the first throw in the infield following a hit, runners will advance from the base they were at when the ball was hit. If it is the second or later throw then runners will advance from the base they are at at the time of the throw.
- o. The player pitch innings are to be the first innings of each game (as described above). A pitcher may pitch only 1 inning per game to a maximum of 35 pitches. After delivering 1 pitch to a batter, that player shall not pitch in any other inning in the game. A pitcher may pitch in 2 games in a single day so long as the total number of pitches in the first game is 25 or less and the total number of pitches during the day does not exceed 35. A pitcher may pitch on consecutive days, so long as the total number of pitches on the first day is 25 or less. A pitcher may not pitch 3 days in a row.
- p. Each team is responsible for maintaining a log of pitches thrown by their pitchers on the form provided by NSBA. A team may request to review their opposition's pitch count log prior to a game. A manager failing to maintain an accurate log may be reported to NSBA or BC Minor Baseball and may face supplemental discipline including the forfeiture of games.
- q. No "Balks" will be called against the Pitcher.
- r. If a Pitcher hits a batter or batters 3 times the Pitcher is to be replaced by another player. One trip to the mound by Coaches per inning – per pitcher. A Pitcher is removed on the 2nd trip to the mound by Coaches. A Pitcher withdrawn from the mound but who stays in the game at another position, shall not be permitted to return to the mound as a Pitcher in the same game.
- s. A batter who is hit by any pitched ball shall advance to first base. Any other runners will advance if forced.
- t. On a pitched ball, the catcher must throw the ball back to the pitcher.
- u. If agreed by both Coaches, a Coach may pitch in lieu of a player for innings (or portions of innings) where player pitching is planned but appropriately skilled Pitchers are not available.
- v. There is no bunting in 9U; a bunt is considered a strike.
- w. The "dropped third strike" rule is not in effect. Batters are out on the third strike.

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- x. A defensive player cannot run with the ball more than 10 feet to put an opposing player out, unless his/her team mates are not in a position to complete the play. If the defensive player does run more than 10 feet, the Umpire will rule the runner safe.
- y. To encourage players to try to make a play:
 - Until the 4th week of games - on a hit ball, an overthrow to any infield position will be declared a dead ball and the runner may not advance.
 - From the 5th week - on a hit ball, the base runner may advance up to 1 base only on an overthrow to any infield position.
- z. When the ball is hit to the outfield, runner(s) may continue to advance until the ball leaves the hand of the outfielder as part of his/her throw to an infield position at which point runners may continue to the next base only. Unless a play is made as a result of the throw, the play is ruled dead and the runner(s) cannot advance beyond the next base at the time of the throw from the outfielder. For example, a base runner that starts on first and has turned 3rd before the ball leaves an outfielder's hand may continue home, but a runner who is on the 2nd base side of 3rd when the ball is released must stop, if the defending team makes no further attempts to make plays. If the defending team makes an attempt at an out and overthrows the ball then the overthrow rule applies and runners may gain one additional base. Umpires will be instructed to use their discretion to place runners appropriately in this situation.
- aa. Leadoffs are not allowed. The ball must cross home plate before any base runner(s) can leave the base(s). When a base runner leaves the base before the pitch crosses home plate and the batter DOES NOT hit the ball, the Umpire shall call "Leadoff" and the base runner must return to the base and no Out is called. When a base runner leaves the base before the pitch crosses home plate and the batter DOES hit the ball, the base runner is automatically out. The batter will be allowed to advance as normal.
- bb. A runner on 2nd may attempt to steal 3rd base. A base runner may only attempt to steal on the 2nd or subsequent pitches thrown by a pitcher or by the machine. When stealing 3rd base, the runner may not advance to home base on an over-thrown or under-thrown ball from the Catcher.
- cc. For clarity, a base runner may in no circumstance gain home base on a play that started with a steal.
- dd. Any base runner that overruns another base runner will be declared out.
- ee. Head first slides are not permitted and any runner performing a head first slide will be called out. Slide or Avoid Rule is in effect which means that the

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- runner has an obligation to slide directly at the base, or if running to avoid contact with the fielder covering the base. If a play is being made, or is about to be made, it is MANDATORY for players of all age groups to slide or make an effort to avoid a collision at all bases and home plate. Failure to do either will result in an automatic out. The ball is dead and no runners may advance beyond the base that was last legally acquired. Conversely, a fielder who blocks access to a base without the ball shall be called for obstruction and the runner will gain the base they are running to.
- ff. The Infield Fly rule does not apply.
 - gg. On fields with no outfield fence, a ball hit in the air past the cones marking the edge of the field will be called a home run. A batted ball that bounces before the marked edge of the field and rolls past the cones marking the edge of the field will be called a ground rule double.
 - hh. Catcher interference rule is in effect. No pitch is to be called. One warning is to be issued to the Catcher and if interference occurs again the batter will be awarded 1st base. Umpires will be instructed to be lenient in the application of this rule and to help “coach” the catchers about where to position themselves.
 - ii. With the introduction of pitchers in 9U, the game slows down. The Umpires will be instructed to use a liberal strike zone to speed up the game and encourage the players to try and hit the ball.
 - jj. The Umpire will call obstruction on a defensive player if the bag or plate is not partly exposed. The runner will be awarded the base. The Umpire will call interference on an offensive player if they interfere with a fielder’s chance to catch the ball. The rules for interference are complex and explained in more detail in the Official Rules of Baseball. Umpires will use their judgement in this regard.
 - kk. At the Umpire’s discretion, a batter may be called out for throwing the bat. If the batter is called out, no base runner will advance.
 - ll. All BC Minor Baseball rules will be in effect but NSBA rules take precedence where in conflict.

5. PLAYOFFS

- a. All 9U teams will compete in the playoffs.
- b. Playoff format is determined by the division coordinator based on field availability.
- c. Trophies or medals will be awarded for 1st, 2nd and 3rd place.

6. ALL-STAR GAME (Optional)

- a. At the discretion of the division coordinator, an All-Star game may be held on a date to be determined at or near the end of the Spring season. The process for selection of the teams and format for this game will be determined by the division coordinator.