



**2026 Brookings Friends of Baseball Youth Baseball  
U9-U12 Tournament Rules  
(Updated: December 2025)**

**Tournament Contact:**

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**Cubby's Sports Bar and Grill Classic:** June 5-7, 2026

**Buffalo Wild Wings Classic:** July 10-12, 2026

**Location** – Games will be played at Southbrook Softball Complex ([Map](#)). Depending on bracket size U9 or U10 bracket may be played at Dwiggin-Medary Park next to Bob Shelden Field ([Map](#)). Teams will be notified of location.

**Equipment**

- Bats: USA and USSSA bats – Size/Weight ratio and barrel size do not matter.
- Any illegal bat will be removed from the game and the batter is out.
- No metal cleats.
- Catchers MUST wear a mask, helmet, chest protector and shin guards.

**Dugout/Team Rules**

- Banners are allowed to be hung on the back of the dug, but not in any location that will affect the view of the field for spectators.
- Music is not allowed to be played from the dugout or the stands. No between innings music, walk-up songs or player introductions.
- Each team will be allowed three coaches on the pass list. Coaches will be given a wristband for the weekend and must present them each day. Wristbands will be available at the east gate next to the batting cages at Southbrook on the first day of the tournament and next to the entrance at the equipment shed at Dwiggin-Medary fields when used
- If temporary fences are used at Southbrook, teams may use the left and right field areas for warmups. Please do not use the center field area for the protection of the players batting in the game taking place on the field.
- Games may start before the scheduled time, provided **both** coaches agree to the start time. Umpires will coordinate with both coaches on an earlier start time. If a field is behind schedule, games will begin approximately 20 minutes after the previous game.
- No pregame infield.

## Game Length

- All games are 6 innings. The second team listed on the tourney machine schedule will be the home team. No coin flip.
- The higher seeded team will be the home team in bracket play. The higher seeded team will be listed second in tourney machine for their first bracket game. Teams will need to know their seed moving forward in bracket play.
- Time Limit:
  - No new inning may begin after 1 hour and 45 minutes in pool play. A new inning begins when the previous inning ends. (*Example: The third out of an inning is made and the umpire has 1 hour 44 minutes on the clock, another inning will be played.*)
  - The home team will receive their turn at bat if the time limit has been reached during the top ½ of an inning if they are behind.
  - For the purpose of clarification: **The Home Plate Umpire is the official timekeeper.** The time limit begins on the first pitch of the game. No game can stop during the middle of an inning due to the time limit unless the home team is ahead after the top half of the last inning.
  - Umpire discretion may be used to extend a game if it is determined by the umpires that a team is stalling in an effort to end the game.
  - There is no time limit for the championship game unless the tournament schedule is adjusted due to weather. Championship bracket games (semifinals) may have a time limit at the discretion of the tournament director as long as it is communicated to the coaches prior to the game, otherwise semifinal games will last 6 innings.
  - The time limit may be adjusted by the tournament director due to weather-related scenarios.
- Run Rule:
  - U9 will have a 5-run limit per inning.
    - The run rule will be in effect for every inning during pool play and consolation bracket games, unless it's the last inning of the 5th place consolation championship.
    - The run rule will not be in effect for the last inning of championship bracket play (semi final & championship), but will be in effect for all other innings.
  - 15-run rule is in effect after 3 innings. 10-run rule is in effect after 4 innings.
  - If a team reaches a 15 run lead while batting, they will be allowed to score three more runs that inning and then will return to defense.
    - Example 1: Offensive team starts the inning with a 10 run lead. The inning ends when they have an 18 run lead.
    - Example 2: Offensive team starts the inning with a 16 run lead. The inning ends when they have a 19 run lead.
    - Example 3: Team leading by 15 comes to bat, they will only be able to score 3 runs.
- Games may not end in a tie in bracket games
  - Following the time-limit or six innings, the California Rule will be utilized until a winner has been determined
    - The last batter to complete their at-bat will be placed at second base and the team will begin with an out.

### Pool Tie-Breakers

- Win-Loss Record (Winning pct.)
- Head-to-Head of teams tied
- Runs Allowed (per game average if number of games not equal)
- Runs Scored (per game average if number of games not equal)
- Teams will be placed within each pool as the No. 1 team, No. 2 team, etc. After pool placement is determined, teams will be placed into brackets based on their pool placement against teams from other pools and in the same placement based on:
  - Overall record
  - Runs allowed
  - Run scored
  - Coin flip will determine bracket placement if two teams are tied after all other tiebreakers are utilized
  - Blind draw will determine bracket placement if more than two teams are tied after all other tiebreakers are utilized
- **Note:** Brackets may be adjusted to avoid teams from the same pool playing each other in the first bracket game.

### Pitching Rules

- The following pitching rules will be used for the tournament:
  - 9U and 10U – 3 innings per game, 6 innings for a two-day tournament, 8 innings for a three-day tournament
  - 11U – 4 innings per game, 6 innings for a 2-day tournament, 8 innings for a 3-day tournament.
  - 12U – 5 innings per game, 6 innings for a 2-day tournament, 8 innings for a 3-day tournament.
- A pitcher may only make one appearance per game. One pitch constitutes an inning pitched. Pitchers will be allowed 5 warm up pitches between innings.
- A team may utilize on intentional walk per game while on defense
- Teams will not forfeit if a pitcher violates maximum innings rules. Pitchers will simply be removed from the game after 3 innings pitched or if pitcher reaches maximum innings allowed for the tournament.
- Pitching distance:
  - 9U/10U divisions will be 46 feet from home plate, 60 feet bases are apart
  - 11U/12U divisions will be 50 feet from home plate, 70 feet bases are apart
- Balks:
  - 9U, 10U, 11U under divisions there is no balk rule. Balks will not be called, but explanations will be given to a pitcher as to why a balk could be called.
  - 12 and under division a balk can be called after one warning and explanation is given to the pitcher.

### **Substitutions/Lineups**

- Teams must have 8 players to start the game. The 9th spot is an automatic out if there are not 9 players to start the game.
- If a team decides to bat the entire roster in the batting order and a player gets hurt, then that spot in the lineup is also an automatic out. Rationale – a team playing 8 players should not have any advantage of batting less players. A team batting everyone should never be able to fake an injury to skip a player in the batting order.
- Teams play the field with 9 players, but can bat 9, 10, or the entire roster in batting order.
- Free substitution may be used defensively for teams that roster bat.
- Courtesy runners for catchers and pitchers at any point of an inning is allowed.
  - Must be a player who has not entered the game if the team is not roster batting.
  - Must be a different runner for each player.
  - Last out if the runner is for a team that is roster batting, or the prior out to avoid the same player running for two different batters in the same inning.
  - If all players are entered into the game (9 players only), then that team may not use a courtesy runner.
- NFHS DH rule will be used allowing teams to DH for any position player.
- A DH and EH may not be used at the same time. The EH is not allowed to play a position.
- Straight 9-player lineup
  - All nine position players are in the lineup
  - Starters may re-enter the game one time in their original batting position.

### **Safety Bag (when used)**

- A batted ball that hits the white section of the double base shall be declared fair. A batted ball that hits the colored section first without first touching or crossing over the white section shall be declared foul.
- Whenever a play is being made on a player who was a batter before becoming a runner, the defense must use the white section of the double first base, and the batter-runner must use the colored section of the base, except in the case of an uncaught third strike (11U/12U only) as noted below.
  - If a throw on a force play requires the defensive player to adjust to make a catch, and any part of his foot touches the white base prior to the runner crossing the colored part of the base, the runner is out even if the defender has part of his foot touching the colored base. It is the runner's responsibility to avoid unnecessary contact.
- On extra-base hits or other balls hit to an area of the field when there is no chance for a play to be made at the double first base, the batter-runner may touch either the white or colored section of the base. However, if the batter-runner makes any effort or turns toward second base, they may only return to the white section of the base to be safe.
  - Once the runner occupies first base they shall only use the white base on plays that include pick-off attempts, tagging on fly balls and remaining in contact with the base on a pitched ball if leading off is not permitted.

- When the batter becomes a runner on a third strike not caught by the catcher (11U/12U only), the batter-runner and the defensive player may use either the colored (orange or green) or white section:
  - On any force out attempt from the foul side of first base; or
  - On any errant throw pulling the defense off the base into foul territory; or
  - When the defensive player uses the colored portion of the double base, the batter-runner can run in fair territory when the throw is coming from the foul side of first base, and if hit by the thrown ball, it is not interference. If intentional interference is ruled, the runner is out.
  - Use of the double first base does not change any other rule concerning interference or obstruction at first base.

### **Base Running**

- Stealing is permitted:
  - 9 and 10 under division: The runner cannot leave the base until the ball crosses the plate. The runner is out if he leaves the base early.
  - 11 under division: The runner cannot leave the base until the ball leaves the pitcher's hand. The runner is out if he leaves the base early.
  - 12 under division: Leading off is allowed.
- Dropped third strike:
  - 9 and 10 under division the batter is OUT on a dropped third strike.
  - 11 and 12 under division the batter may run on a dropped third strike unless first base is occupied with less than 2 outs.
- Home Plate (9U and 10U Divisions):
  - Runners may NOT advance to home on a passed ball or wild pitch.
  - A runner may not steal home on an overthrow back to the pitcher nor can a runner advance home by enticing the catcher with an extended lead to throw to 3<sup>rd</sup>.
  - In 1st and 3rd situations: A runner at third base may not advance home if the catcher has attempted a throw down to second base in a steal situation. If an error occurs on the throw, the runner at third may not advance. In other instances of a runner attempting to steal 2<sup>nd</sup>, that runner may advance to third at his own risk on an overthrow or error, but no runner may advance from third to home.
  - In other words, home is only open by contact.
- Home Plate (11U and 12U Divisions): Home plate is open

### **Bunting/Infield Fly Rule**

- 9U and 10U - Bunting and fake bunting is not allowed
  - First offense is a team warning (No pitch is credited)
  - Second and subsequent offenses the batter is out (No pitch is credited)
- The infield fly rule will not be utilized.

### **Slide Rule In Effect**

- A legal slide is either feet first or head first into any base.
- If a fielder has the ball before the runner reaches 2nd, 3rd, or home, the runner is out if contact is made, umpire discretion will be applied, and the decision is final.
- Runners are not required to slide in situations where there is no play being made per the umpire's judgment. Runners must avoid contact or slide.

- Sliding is part of baseball, so when in doubt the umpires have been instructed to error on the side of safety. Please tell your kids to slide.

### **Sportsmanship**

- Bad sportsmanship by coaches and parents is subject to ejection from the game and/or tournament upon the umpire's and/or tournament director's discretion.
- Coaches are responsible for parent and fan behavior.
- Games may be umpired by youth umpires. Please keep that in mind. These kids will make mistakes and miss calls. Adult umpires make mistakes and miss calls.
- We coach our youth umpires to:
  - Hustle but don't rush so you keep plays in front of you.
  - Communicate with coaches who ask questions but don't yell.
  - Work on consistent strike zones with the understanding kids are there to swing the bats.
  - Have fun. They all once played in these tournaments.
- If for some reason they make a mistake concerning the rules of the game please have them contact the tournament director. The tournament director will confer with the umpires, not the coaches.
- Our umpires are instructed they can use their cell phones for two reasons during a game. One is to contact the tournament director. The second is to track time for time limit purposes.

### **Entry Fee**

- A team's spot is not guaranteed until the tournament entry fee is received or the coach or team manager has made appropriate arrangements for payment of the entry fee.
- A team that has officially registered for the tournament will not be refunded its tournament fee if they decided not to participate in the tournament within 30 days of the tournament.

### **Tournament Refund Policy**

- Zero Games Played - \$200 Refund
- One Game Played - \$150 Refund
- Two or More Games Played - No Refund
- Gate Fee Will Not Be Refunded

### **Tournament Admission Prices**

- Adult
  - Tournament Pass - \$20
  - Daily - \$10
- High School/Middle School
  - Tournament Pass - \$10
  - Daily \$5
- Veterans and Elementary/Younger are free of charge