

Official FVBL Playing Rules

PONY LEAGUE

7th & 8th Grades



PURPOSE: This is a competitive league with an emphasis on more advanced skills, continuing with instruction and sportsmanship as our highest values.

1. GENERAL GAME RULES:

- A. Umpires will have complete control and authority of all games. Prior to the game, the home team or host organization shall rule on field conditions. Once the game starts, the umpire governs delays or whether the playing field is safe. Exception: at facilities equipped with lightening detection systems, the guidelines for the detection system must be followed.
- B. A minimum of eight (8) players and a maximum of nine (9) must be fielded at all times. A team can begin the game and play with eight (8) players.
- C. No player will sit out for two (2) consecutive innings nor will a player sit out a 2nd inning before all other players have sat out for one (1) inning.
- D. Players are required to play at least 1 inning in the infield and 1 inning in the outfield within the first 5 innings.
- E. The only exception to rules C & D is when a 1st year player pitches the first 4 innings of a game. That player is exempt from playing the outfield during the first 4 innings. This player must either sit or play outfield the fifth inning. If the player plays outfield in the fifth inning, they must sit in the sixth inning. And if the player sits in the fifth inning. They must play outfield in the sixth inning.
- F. Players cannot play the same position more than 4 innings in one game.
- G. The pitching rubber shall be 54 feet from the furthest point of home plate to the front of the pitching rubber.
- H. A Pitcher will receive one warning when a balk is committed. After subsequent infractions, all base runners will be awarded a base.
- I. Intentional walks are allowed.
- J. Games will be 7 Innings.
- K. The first 4 innings will have a 5 run max rule. *The only exception to this rule is that the last play of the half inning shall be allowed to finish. If additional runs are scored on the final play, those runs shall count. Final play MUST be initiated with ball in play via a "hit". For example, if a team has scored four (4) runs and has the bases loaded and hits a three (3) run triple all three (3) runs shall count for that team which would make their inning count seven (7) runs. The spirit of this rule is to reward the hitter that put the ball in play. Any runs scored due to errant throws for dropped 3rd strike or pickoff throws would not be counted after 5 run max has been reached for the inning.



- L. The 5th, 6th, 7th and extra innings have no run limits, & will revert to the Mercy Rule.
- H. All bats -5 or greater must be stamped “BPF 1.15 USSSA” or “USA Baseball”. No restriction on weight or length as long as the bat has the “BPF 1.15” stamp. All -3 bats must be stamped “BBCOR”. Wood bats allowed. The bat’s barrel cannot exceed 2 3/4”.
- M. No NEW inning will start **2 hours** after the start of the game. A new inning starts when the last out of the previous inning is made. Attempts shall be made to play as many innings per game as possible.
- N. **A game is considered official upon reaching the designated time limit, or when the umpire ends the game early due to daylight or weather conditions.**
- O. **If the game is stopped by the umpire due to daylight/weather, & the home team is losing, the score will revert back to the score at the last complete inning. If the home team is ahead, the home team wins. If the score is tied, the game ends in a tie.**
- P. Game times are to be respected, but traffic may cause game delays due to travel between towns. Forfeits for game delays are discouraged and are only approved by the FVBL Commissioner.
- Q. Metal spikes allowed where field conditions permit.
- R. Leadoffs and base stealing of any base permitted.
- S. The “Infield-Fly” rule and “Dropped Third Strike” rules are in effect.
- T. A 12-run mercy rule is after 5 innings (4.5 if home team is winning) or 10 runs after 6 innings (5.5 if home team is winning). **12 after 5, 10 after 6.**
- U. If safety base is present, it can only be used defensively on a drop third strike, to avoid contact on a ball to first base side, otherwise it is for the baserunner only.
- V. **No protests allowed.**

2. PITCHING LIMITATIONS:

- A. A pitcher can pitch no more than 4 innings per game. A single pitch thrown counts as 1 inning pitched regarding this pitch limitation.

A first year (younger grade) player must pitch 2 COMPLETE innings out of the first 4 innings. A complete inning consists of 5 runs or 3 outs, whichever comes first.

No other pitch limitations are in effect.

3. BASE RUNNING:

- A. Base paths to be set at eighty feet (80') apart with chalked foul lines.



- B. No headfirst sliding (except when returning to a base): If a runner slides head first they will be called out, as this is done to promote the safety of the players.
- C. If a play is made at a base, a player must attempt to avoid contact by sliding on plays at any base (except first base).
- D. A player may not run out of the baseline, or jump (leave the ground) over the catcher to avoid contact with the catcher. If it is determined by the umpire that the player jumped over a catcher to avoid contact that player will be called out and the ball is dead. If unintentional contact is made, the runner may be called out and the ball would be dead (umpire's discretion). If the act is determined to be flagrant, the offender shall be ejected, & subject to FVBL consequences. The umpire's decision on the sliding rules is final and is not subject to protest.
- E. Catchers and pitchers may have an optional courtesy runner if they reach base with less than two outs. A courtesy runner is required with there are two outs for purposes of moving the game along. The courtesy runner must be the player who recorded the most recent out. If for some reason that player is also a catcher or a pitcher, then the next player who recorded the next most recent out will be the courtesy runner.
- F. No hidden ball tricks.
- G. Stealing and leadoffs are allowed.
- H. If safety base is present, it can only be used defensively on a drop third strike, to avoid contact on a ball to first base side, otherwise it is for the baserunner only.
- I. Playoff Rules:
 - a. **No time limit for playoff games, but umpire can call game early due to daylight/weather issues.**
 - b. If the game is tied at the end of the 7th inning, California Rules will be in effect for extra innings (Runner starts on 2nd base with a 1-1 count on the batter, last player to make an out the inning before will be the runner at 2nd base)