

HYAA 3rd / 4th Grade Baseball Rules

April 2010

Administration:

1. The 3rd/4th grade league is an instructional league. Its objective is to help players develop skills of hitting, throwing, fielding, running, and understanding of the game. In addition coaches should provide an enjoyable atmosphere and help players develop good sportsmanship, teamwork, leadership, and team spirit.
2. HYAA is a member of the Babe Ruth Baseball / Cal Ripken division. The official rules can be found at the below HYAA website. This document references the official rules and Sections where applicable,

<http://hyaa.org/baseball/HYAA%20BASEBALL%20RULES%20AMENDED.pdf>

3. At least one Umpire will be provided for each game.
 [**Optional**]: If umpires do not show coaches may agree upon a designated umpire.
4. Play-offs will be played at the conclusion of the regular season.
5. The Home Team shall use the 1st base dugout.
6. Each Coach shall provide umpires with a game ball.
7. Each Coach must prepare a line-up before the start of a game, listing all players in attendance, as described below in the "Basic Rules of Play" section.
8. Games **MUST** start promptly in order to complete a game within the time constraints and without impacting other game schedules. Coaches please remind parents to have the players show up early.
9. Coaches must keep score. The winning coach should report the score to the League President no later than the day following the game. In the event of a tie game, the coaches can decide who will report the score to the League President.
10. Coaches shall provide player rankings at the end of the season to the League President to be used for next year's draft.

Equipment:

1. Catchers must wear appropriate catchers gear.
2. Batters and runners must wear helmets.
3. All players must wear cups.
4. All players should wear cleats. Metal spikes are NOT permitted.

Basic Rules of Play:

1. Base distances shall be set to 60 ft [Sect 6.12].
2. Pitching distance shall be 46 ft from the pitching rubber to the rear point of home plate [Sect 6.12].
3. A game is considered complete in any of the following cases [Sect 5.14]:
 - a. Six innings are completed regardless of score.
 - b. A minimum of 4 full innings are completed, regardless of score, and the game is halted by umpire because of time, darkness or inclement weather. If the game was

stopped due to inclement weather, it may be resumed if time, weather and field conditions permit.

- c. A minimum of 3 and one-half innings are completed, and the home team is in the lead, and the game is halted by umpire because of time, darkness, or inclement weather. If the game was stopped due to inclement weather, it may be resumed if time, weather and field conditions permit.

NOTE: A game may end in a tie except in the play-offs.

4. No new inning may start more than 1 hour and 45 minutes after the first pitch of the game.
5. The chief umpire shall record the starting time of the game and shall notify each coach when an inning will be the last. For example if a new inning starts 1 hour and 30 minutes into the game and the umpire does not believe that another inning can be played there-after, the inning will be considered the last and the **LAST INNING RULE** described below will apply.
5. A team must begin the game with at least 8 players [sect 6.1].
 [Optional] If a team is short players, coaches may agree, prior to the start of the game, to borrow players each inning from the opposing team in order to field the minimum number of players
6. Borrowed players must still bat for their own team. A team should borrow players that are at the bottom of the line-up for a given inning. If a borrowed player is required to bat for their team, the player making the last out shall replace that player.
7. The defensive team may have up to nine players on the field. No more than six defensive players (including the pitcher and the catcher) may be on the infield dirt until the ball is hit by the batter.
 [Optional] If coaches agree both teams may field 4 outfielders for a max total of 10 defensive players.
8. Each team will provide a line-up that consists of all eligible players in attendance. Players will bat in the order listed in the line-up even if they did not play defense that inning. And the batting order shall remain in effect for the entire game. Players arriving late shall be appended to the end of the team's batting order [Sect 6.2].
9. No player can sit on the bench for two consecutive defensive innings [Sect 6.3]. Exception is if a player is injured or due to illness. If a player is injured or ill, they may be skipped in the batting order without penalty.
10. There will be 3 outs per half inning.
11. There will be a **5 RUN LIMIT RULE** limit per half inning. If 5 runs are recorded prior to a team making 3 outs, the half inning will end and the opposing team will come to bat.
12. When the umpire declares an inning to be the last inning, the **LAST INNING RULE** will be in effect. The last inning is unlimited in terms of runs scored. A half inning ends when 3 outs are recorded.
13. No mercy rule shall apply. The goal is to provide the players as much playing time as possible.
14. Coaches are ONLY permitted in the first and third base Coaches box while their team is batting [Sect 6.6].
15. Coaches are NOT permitted in the field when their team is playing defense.
16. The Infield fly rule will NOT be in effect.
17. Bunting is permitted. Once a player shows bunt on a pitch, the player may NOT swing away on that pitch. Players doing so will be called out.

Base Running:

1. Base runners are permitted to take a lead ONLY after the pitch has crossed home plate.
2. A base runner may steal from 1st base to 2nd and from 2nd base to 3rd. Stealing Home is NOT permitted.
3. If a team is ahead by 10 runs when they bat a **SLOW DOWN RULE** will be in effect for that half inning. The team will NOT be allowed to steal when this rule is in effect.
4. Base runners must slide to avoid contact when there is a close play at a base. Failure to do so will result in the runner being called out [Sect 6.8].

NO HEAD-FIRST sliding is permitted. A runner sliding HEAD-FIRST will result in the runner being called out [Sect 6.8]. **[EXCEPTION]** This does NOT apply if a runner is returning to a base from a rundown or pick-off situation. This only applies when attempting to advance a base.

5. If a fielder fakes possession of the ball, causing a runner to make an unnecessary slide, that runner will be awarded one extra base (except home plate) [Sect 6.9].
18. Play ends when the ball is returned to the Pitcher's mound. No further advances by base runners are permitted at this time.
19. In an effort to avoid unlimited running, base runners may ONLY advance one base on an error. **[EXCEPTION]** Base runners may NOT advance on an errant throw from the catcher on a steal attempt. Base runners may not advance on subsequent errors. For example,
 - a. If a batted ball is overthrown to first base, the base runner(s) may ONLY advance one base on the error. They may not advance further if the defense then throws the ball again in error.
 - b. If a runner is on first and a batted ball is over-thrown to second during an attempted force-out, the runners may ONLY advance one base. They may not advance on subsequent errors.
 - c. If a batted ball is hit to the outfield and the ball is overthrown back to the infielders, the runner(s) may ONLY advance one base.

NOTE: Coaches use your discretion. Ultimately we don't want players to run around the bases on multiple errors during the same play. The underlying purpose is to teach proper execution of both offense and defense surrounding a play.

20. Catcher speed-up rule - When there are two outs and the catcher is a base-runner, the base-runner should be replaced with a teammate that made the last out [Sect 6.10].
21. An injured base-runner may be replaced by a teammate who made the last batted out [Sect 6.5].
22. Tagging up is permitted.

Pitching:

1. A pitcher may pitch a maximum of 2 innings per game and 4 innings per week.
2. A pitcher is limited to 8 warm-up pitches in the first inning and 5 warm-up pitches each inning there-after.
3. Umpires shall call balls and strikes.
4. Coaches will NOT pitch.

NOTE: Coaches may agree to use discretion during a game if time constraints become an issue.

5. Batters shall walk if a pitcher pitches 4 balls. A batter hit by a pitch shall be awarded first base.

6. If 3 batters are walked, and/or hit by a pitch in a half inning, a **2-STRIKE RULE** will go into effect for that half inning. Batters may still be called out on strikes. At this point, however, balls will NOT be called on a batter until the batter has 2 strikes on them. In addition batters will NOT be awarded first base if hit by a pitch. This rule remains in effect for the half inning even if a pitching change is made.

NOTE: Coaches be aware of pitch count when the 2-STRIKE RULE is in effect. Cal Ripken does not specify a pitch count but use 75 pitches as a guideline with a rest of 1 day per 25 pitches.

Play-offs:

1. Regular season rules apply with the exception of what is described within this section.
2. A team must field a minimum of 8 players. Borrowing of players will NOT be permitted. If a team does not have a minimum of 8 players the team forfeits the play-off game.
3. The last inning of a play-off game will be unlimited. The 5 run and 10 batter limits will NOT apply.
4. In the event of a tie, extra innings shall be played as necessary.
5. All teams will participate in the play-offs. In the case of 7 teams in the league play-offs will occur as follows,

First Round of play-offs:

- a. the 1st place team will receive a bye in the first round of play-offs. In the event of a tie for 1st place the team with the most runs for and least runs against will have the bye. If a tie still exists a coin toss will be used.
- b. the 2nd place team will play the 7th place team.
- c. the 3rd place team will play the 6th place team.
- d. the 4th place team will play the 5th place team.

Second Round of play-offs:

- a. the 1st place team will play the lowest ranked remaining team.
- b. the remaining teams will play each other.

Championship:

- a. the winners of the second round play-offs will play for the Championship.

Sportsmanship:

1. Harassment of opposing players is not permitted. This includes catchers talking to batters, rattling the screens in the dugouts, and attempts to distract the pitcher when delivering a pitch.
2. Once a pitcher comes to the set position, all cheering, yelling or distractive action must stop. Intentionally trying to rattle or disturb a pitcher or a batter is considered unsportsmanlike conduct and will not be permitted.
3. Arguing umpire ball and strike calls is not permitted.
4. Each team is responsible for cleaning out the dugouts after their game is over.