

GRASSLAND BASEBALL RULES & REGULATIONS

5-6 LEAGUE

The 5-6 League is generally the first introduction to organized baseball for players. It must be understood that this is a training league. The primary objective is to ensure that each player has had a “positive experience” with baseball, desires to play again the following year, and has been taught the fundamentals as listed below. Constant positive reinforcement is critical towards achieving this objective. Coaches should consider the individual needs of each player, and focus on positive reinforcement and making positive comments as much as possible. Throughout the season, players should be taught the basics of baseball. By the end of the season, Coaches should strive to have taught their players the following:

1. The names of the defensive positions.
2. How to execute the throw (step on opposite foot of throwing arm).
3. Proper fielding position (down and ready).
4. How to hold the glove in a position to catch (fingers up, fingers down).
5. How to properly hold the bat (back and shoulder height).
6. What to do after the ball is hit (as a batter and as a runner).
7. How, why and when to run to the next base (on the ground vs. in the air).
8. Where to throw the ball if it is hit in play (to the base of the lead runner).

LEAGUE SPECIFIC PLAYING RULES

1. NUMBER OF PLAYERS

- 1.1. If a team has at least eight (8) players at the start of the game, the coach of that team may “borrow” a defensive player from the opposing team to play in the field. The borrowed player may only play an outfield position. When and if an additional rostered player arrives, he must replace any “borrowed” defensive player.

2. FIELD DIMENSIONS

- 2.1. The distance between the bases is 50 feet.
- 2.2. The center of the pitcher's circle shall be 38-feet from the back point of home plate.
- 2.3. An arc, measuring eight (8) feet from the rear-most point of home plate, shall be lined on the field. Any hit ball not passing that line will be ruled foul and will count as a pitch. Any ball not passing the arc cannot be fielded and no plays may be made on base runners.
- 2.4. A circle will be placed around the "pitcher's mound," and will be approximately 12-feet in diameter. The player-pitcher must stay in the circle until the ball is hit.
- 2.5. A line will be placed approximately 25-feet from the rear-most point of home plate. The coach-pitcher must stay fully behind this line when delivering a pitch.

3. GAME AND INNING LENGTH

- 3.1. The game shall be a maximum of six (6) innings, or 1:00 in length.
- 3.2. An inning consists of three (3) outs or five runs, whichever comes first.
- 3.3. The Mercy Rule will be 15 runs after 3 innings, 10 runs after 4 innings, or 8 runs any time after 5 innings.

4. PLAYING TIME

- 4.1. Every player must play on offense and defense in every game that child is present.
- 4.2. Except in a post season Intra-League Tournament, the same player may not appear in the pitcher's position in two consecutive innings.

5. OFFICIATING AND SCOREKEEPING

- 5.1. In the event the regular umpire does not arrive by the time a game is scheduled to start, the Home team shall supply the umpire. The umpire shall assume a position behind the pitcher, and will monitor the number of attempts made by the batter, and will enforce all rules as dictated by the GBL Official rulebook.

5.2. Scores shall be kept in all regular and post-season games. At the end of each game, the Home Team shall report the final score of the game to their age group commissioner or to the Program Director.

6. EQUIPMENT AND BASEBALLS

6.1. Games will be played with GBL approved and supplied baseballs only. No other baseballs may be used.

6.2. All bats used in all leagues must comply with the USABat standard for the specified age.

7. PROTESTS

7.1. No protest of any kind shall be allowed. The decision of the umpire shall be final.

8. POSITIONING AND DEFENSIVE PLAYERS

8.1. No maximum number of players in the field – 6 in the infield, and the rest in the outfield.

8.2. The player catcher shall wear a helmet with a facemask and a chest protector. For safety, the player catcher shall be positioned behind the batter and beside the coach catcher.

8.3. All outfielders must be positioned at approximately an equal depth and must be a minimum of ten (10) feet behind the base paths until the ball is hit. No short fielder will be allowed.

8.4. Infielders cannot be positioned closer than 5 feet inside the base paths between first and second base, and second and third base until the ball is hit.

8.5. The player pitcher shall always wear a helmet with a facemask when the ball is in play. The ball is considered in play when the coach pitcher pitches the ball and until the subsequent play is ruled dead by the umpire.

8.6. The player pitcher must have at least one foot in the circle around the pitcher's mound before the ball is pitched and must stand level to or behind the pitcher-coach. If there is a pitching mound, the player must have at least one foot on the mound until the ball is pitched.

9. BATTING

9.1. Each player will get seven opportunities to put the ball in play. First, five balls are to be pitched. If the batter fails to put the ball in play after five pitches, the batter will get two attempts from a batting tee. If the batter still fails to put the ball in play, the batter will return to the bench, an out will not be recorded, and the next batter will take his turn.

9.2. Batter must make contact with the ball. A dead ball will be called anytime a batter makes full contact with the tee, no matter where the ball lands.

9.3. The player's batting stance cannot be out of the batter's box.

9.4. Deliberate bunting is an automatic out. Ball is dead.

10. BASERUNNING

10.1. There will be no base stealing. Runners leaving the base before the ball is hit will be called out, and the ball will be dead. (No warning will be given, and there will be no exceptions).

10.2. Base runners may advance after tagging up on a fly ball.

10.3. Any base runner called out may not remain on base, and must return to the dugout.

10.4. Base runners may advance as many bases as they can, at their own risk, on any batted ball, except:

10.4.1. Base runners may advance only one (1) additional base, at their own risk, in the event of an overthrow by an infielder, regardless of any play that a defensive player or players may attempt.

10.5. A play is dead when the umpire determines that the forward progress of the lead runner comes to a complete stop. All other runners will return to the nearest base achieved on the previous play.

10.6. Runners will be awarded the next base if the umpire determines the runner was halfway or further or was forced to the next base when the play was stopped.

10.7. If the offensive team is winning at any time in a game by fifteen (15) or more runs, players may only advance one base, at their own risk, on any batted ball (“running station-to-station”). If the lead falls below 15 runs, the offensive team may resume base running as described in Section 11 of the rules.

11. COACHING

11.1. Coaches will be permitted to coach on the field in the following fashion-
Offense: one coach each at first and third base coaches’ box, one coach to pitch and one coach to catch. Defense: no more than three coaches will be allowed in the field, and they must be positioned at least six (6) feet behind the base paths. Generally, this will be the edge of the outfield grass.

11.2. No coach shall touch a base runner while the ball is in play. Violation shall result in an out being called on the affected base runner.