



# MINNETONKA BASEBALL ASSOCIATION

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## Community League 9

### Minnetonka Baseball Association (MBA) Community League 9 Rules

Community 9 emphasizes the basic skills of throwing, catching, and hitting while advancing tactical elements such as base running, stealing, bunting, situational fielding, and pitching.

Team standings are kept to encourage competitive play. However, safety, competition, fun, skill development, sportsmanship, and respect for the game including respect for teammates, opponents, umpires and coaches are our objectives.

Ten players per inning play defensively, and all players bat in continuous order. Community 9 introduces the use of a "hard" regulation baseball and player pitchers for the entire season. One goal of the league is to encourage the development of pitching abilities of players during the season and to create a situation where each player has a positive experience doing so. Therefore, it is the expectation that each player will pitch at least one inning during the regular season.

#### Local Rules

1. Players, coaches, parents and fans will observe the MBA Code of Conduct at all times.
2. The home team will supply two new game balls and a sufficient number of "backup" balls to the umpire.
3. Umpires will have jurisdiction over the entire playing field and grandstands. There will be no protests of umpire judgment rulings.
4. If a coach has a question on the application of a specific rule or interpretation of a rule, they must wait for the play to end. Ask for time to be called, and then ask for permission and include the other coach in a limited conversation with the umpire. Ultimately, both coaches must agree with the interpretation of the rule or the umpires' ruling will stand.
5. Teams are responsible for cleaning up the dugout and bleacher areas following each game.
6. The home team will occupy the third base dugout.
7. All batters, base runners and player-base-coaches must wear a helmet. Catchers must wear all catchers' gear including a catcher's mask with neck guard. And all players must wear a protective cup.

#### Time Limits and Game Completion:

1. Each game will consist of six innings (or less if the time limits the number of innings).
2. A half-inning consists of 3 outs or 5 runs, whichever comes first.
3. A game is considered official after 4 innings or 3\_ if the home team is ahead.
4. No new inning shall start after 1hr 40 minutes from the official start of game; the official start time is to be noted by the umpire and should be communicated to each coach prior to the game.
5. There is no hard stop time; if an inning starts prior to the 1:40 mark it will finish regardless of the time (both teams bat unless the home team is ahead); this could mean some games will run late.
6. The first new inning that starts at or after the 1 hour and 30 minute mark and before the 1 hour and 40 minute mark of the game will be determined the last inning. This last inning will be expired when a team obtains 3 outs or the home team takes the lead (no five run rule). If this inning ends before the 1:40 mark, it is still considered the last inning and the game is over regardless of the score.
7. If an inning starts prior to the 1 hour and 30 minute mark it will be played using the normal 5 run / 3 out rules (because it did not start between the 1:30 and 1:40 mark). If, for example, an inning started at the 1 hour and 29 minute mark and lasted 11 minutes, which puts you past the 1 hour and 40 minute mark, the game is over. Neither team will benefit from the last inning rule regardless of the score.
8. All games ending in a tie will be recorded as a tie. All tied games having completed a minimum of 4 innings, which is called due to darkness or weather (umpires discretion), will result in a tie.
9. Any game called due to darkness or weather that has not completed 4 innings (or 3.5 innings if the home team is ahead) should be scheduled for completion at the next earliest time convenient to both teams.

#### Fielding

1. Teams play with 10 defensive players comprised of a full infield and 4 outfielders. With less than 10 fielders, a full infield must be in place with the remainder in the outfield. Outfielders must start play at least 20 feet from the infield dirt. A team must field at least eight (8) players or forfeit the game. An unofficial game can be played with borrowed fielders from the other team being used in the outfield.
2. Players (with the only possible exception of the pitcher and catcher) rotate to different positions after each inning and given approximately equal time in the infield, outfield and bench. No player will be on the bench twice before all players have been on the bench.

- a. Each Player will play infield at least twice in the first 5 innings.
  - b. No player may play the same position more than 3 innings in a game (including Pitcher).
3. Only fielders assigned to an infield position can make a play at a base. Outfielders may not cover a bag for a force play; they must throw the ball to the infielders. If an outfielder makes a play at a base, the runner will be called safe. Outfielders should position themselves at least 20' from the infield prior to a pitched ball.
  4. The infield fly rule can be enforced by the umpire. It is up to the umpire to determine if an infield fly is called. Coaches are encouraged to teach players about the infield fly rule and have runners pay attention for the call and not to assume whether that the call will be made or not.

### **Hitting and Running**

1. Since the entire season will be live pitching; batters may get called out on strikes and be issued a walk. If hit by a pitched ball the batter will be awarded first base.
2. All players bat in order throughout a game regardless of whether they took the field the previous half inning. The same batting order will be followed throughout the season continuously across games. The on-deck batter for the last out leads off the next game so all players get equal at bats. The batting order can be reset for the beginning of the playoffs, but that new order must be continuously followed throughout the playoffs.
3. Prior to the first game of the season, and prior to the tournament when a batting order change is made, each head coach will send the teams batting order to the League Coordinator.
4. Bunting is allowed.
5. Base stealing is allowed on a limited basis. The runner may not leave the bag until the ball is in crosses home plate. Players may only steal 2nd and 3rd base this season. Stealing home is not permitted. A runner may only score from third base by: (1) advancing on a batted ball; (2) advancing on a bases loaded walk. A runner who begins a play at first, second or third base may not advance to home on an overthrow by a catcher or other defensive player on an attempted steal. (Example: Runners at 1st and 3rd. Runner on 1st attempts to steal second. The catcher overthrows second. Runner on 3rd may not advance to home.) The runner that attempts to steal home, or advance to home on an overthrow during an attempted steal is at risk until returning to 3rd. If the runner leaves the playing field after stealing home or advancing to home on an overthrow during an attempted steal will be called out (see Little League rules for leaving the field of play). "Base runners on First or Second base may take only one base on a passed ball or wild pitch. Base runners cannot advance beyond the base they were initially stealing in the case of a defensive player's error or overthrow."
6. Base runners cannot lead off. "If a base runner leaves early a dead ball is declared by the umpire and the base runner is sent back to the base. On the 2<sup>nd</sup> violation by the team, the runner is called out. Base runners must return to their base when the pitcher steps onto the mound with the ball and must remain on the base until the next pitched ball crosses the plate."
7. Runners must slide on a close play except at 1st base. A runner not sliding on a close play can be called out. It is the umpire's judgment on whether it is a close play. Headfirst slides are not allowed except when returning to a base. Runners using a head first slide other than returning to a base will be called out. A player cannot run more than 3 feet off the base line to avoid a tag.
8. A batter is out if they throw their bat. There are no warnings for thrown bats. If the umpire determines the bat was thrown, the umpire must call them out.
9. Base coaches will be adults and may be assisted by a team player wearing a helmet.
10. Runners may advance at their own risk until the play is dead.
11. Play will be considered dead when the pitcher is in possession of the ball within six feet of the pitching mound. "A runner must go back to the base if they are not at least half way to the next base when the ball is declared dead." This is an umpire judgment call.
12. There is no on-deck circle. All on-deck batters must stay in the dugout.

### **MBA Pitching Rules**

1. Pitchers, once removed from the mound, may not return as pitchers.
2. Pitchers who deliver 41 or more pitches cannot play catcher for the remainder of that day.
3. Any player on a regular season team may pitch and there is no limit to the number of pitchers a team may use in a game.
4. MBA does not allow curveballs. "Breaking Balls are not allowed; any player determined by the umpire to be throwing a curveball will first be warned and the pitch in question will be called a ball. Upon a second offense, a ball will again be called and the pitcher is required to be removed from the mound (not the game entirely)."
5. MBA has adopted the pitch count method of moderating the stress on pitcher's arms as well as provide opportunity for all kids to contribute pitching.
6. Pitch Count Rules and Rest: Pitchers at all levels must adhere to the following Little League rest requirements:
  - a. If a player pitches 66 - 75 pitches in a day, four (4) calendar days of rest must be observed.
    - i. Example: Throw 68 pitches Sunday: Rest; Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday; Pitch again Friday.
  - b. If a player pitches 51-65 pitches in a day, three (3) calendar days of rest must be observed.
  - c. If a player pitches 36 - 50 pitches in a day, two (2) calendar days of rest must be observed.
  - d. If a player pitches 21 - 35 pitches in a day, one (1) calendar day of rest must be observed.
  - e. If a player pitches 1-20 pitches in a day, no calendar day of rest is required before pitching again.
  - f. Note the maximum pitch count for 8-year olds is 50 per day, 9-10 year-olds is 75 per day and 11-12 year-olds is 85 per day.
7. Pitchers may not pitch in more than one game in a day.
8. Tracking pitch counts: Each team must designate an official pitch count recorder. The pitch count recorder must provide the current pitch count for any pitcher when requested by either manager or any umpire. However, the manager is responsible for knowing when his/her pitcher must be removed. The official pitch count recorder should inform the umpire-in-chief when a pitcher has delivered his/her maximum limit of pitches for the game. The umpire-in-chief will inform the pitcher's manager that the pitcher must be removed. However, the failure by the pitch count recorder to notify the umpire-in-chief, and/or the failure of the umpire-in-chief to notify the manager, does not relieve the manager of his/her responsibility to remove a pitcher when that pitcher is no longer eligible. Violation of any section of this regulation can result in protest of the game in which it occurs.
9. Pitchers must follow the pitch count program. The coach must remove the pitcher from the mound (not the game) when said pitcher reaches the 75 pitches.
  - a. A player's pitch count is linked to the player's league age, not the league they are playing in; thus if a player playing in Minor League 9 is playing up with their grade but by league age is 8 years old, the maximum number of pitches for that player is 50 in one game.
10. If a pitcher reaches any pitch limit while facing a batter, the pitcher may continue to pitch until that batter reaches base or is put out.

- a. For example, if a pitcher begins facing a batter at pitch 19 and the at bat finishes at pitch 23, the pitcher is follows the rest guidelines provided in rule 6e (1-20 pitches in a day, no calendar day of rest is required).
  - b. If, however, the pitcher begins facing a batter at pitch 19 and the at bat finishes at pitch 20, throwing pitch 21 to a new batter would require the pitcher to follow the rest guidelines of rule 6d (21-35 pitches in a day, one (1) calendar day of rest must be observed).
11. Once the pitcher takes the mound, the pitcher has 1 minute to complete the warm-up (no more than 8 warm-up pitches). The time in this case will govern.
  12. Notes about pitching: Community 9 offers players the opportunity to demonstrate pitching skills in game situations. It is not a pitching instruction league. Players interested in pitching regularly should be preparing on their own to improve their throwing speed and accuracy. Coaches are not required to provide equal pitching opportunities to all players. The only requirement beyond the pitch count rules is that every player gets to pitch at least one full inning over the course of the season.

Last Updated March 20, 2017. (CV/CJ)