

## **Williamsburg Youth Baseball League Rules**

*The following rules supersede relevant sections in the Cal Ripken Rules for the four WYBL leagues for players 9–12. Ripken Rules not addressed here remain in force. Safety, sportsmanship, and fair play are the goals for all WYBL rules.*

### **League Structure**

Minors Divisions: Ages 9–10, 11–12      Majors Divisions: Ages 9–10, 11–12

### **Time Limit**

Games are six innings in length. A new inning will not begin after 1 hour and 40 minutes has elapsed even if the score is tied. The umpire-in-chief will keep the official time.

### **Tie Games; Extra Innings**

In the event of a tie, one extra inning may be played until the time limit expires. If a regular season game remains tied after the extra inning or time limit expires, the game will end in a tie and be recorded as such. If a playoff game remains in a tie after the extra inning, International Tiebreak Rules will apply: The last batter of the current inning will be placed on second base with 0 outs. The next individual in the lineup will be placed at bat and play will continue from that point. This will continue so forth and so on until a winner is determined. Both Away and Home teams will have an opportunity.

### **Suspending Games—Rule 4.12 (7)**

In addition to 4.12 (1–6), which remain in effect, the following replaces 4.12 (7): A game shall become a suspended game that must be completed at a future date if the game is terminated [because]: 7. The game has not become a regulation game (3 ½ innings with the home team ahead or 4 complete innings with the visiting club ahead or tied). If a game has become a regulation game when play is suspended, the game will be resumed at the point of stoppage at the direction of the field coordinator. The completion of a suspended game is a continuation of the original game. The lineup and batting order of both teams shall be exactly the same as the lineup and batting order at the moment of suspension, subject to the rules governing substitution. Any player may be replaced by a player who had not been in the game prior to the game's suspension.

### **Pitchers and Defensive Substitutions**

Once a pitcher is relieved of his pitching duties, he may not re-enter as pitcher in the same game. Otherwise there are free defensive substitutions (see below).

### **Pitching Rules: Arm Care**

Arm care is a high priority for WYBL's volunteer leadership and coaches. The following rules are intended to gradually increase young pitchers' workload across the different environments of minors and majors. To help develop as many pitchers as possible, minors leagues have both pitch and innings limits; majors leagues work with pitch limits.

### Minors Divisions Innings Limits

League	Max innings per game	Max innings per week
9–10 Minors	2	6
11–12 Minors	3	6

The pitching week runs Monday to Sunday. WYBL typically schedules two games per week; rainouts or other rescheduling can lead to three games in a week. In addition to these innings limitations, the following pitch counts and required rest will apply during WYBL 9-12 Minors league play:

### Minors Divisions Pitch Limits / Required Rest

League	Max pitches per game	Required Rest		
		0 days	1 day	2 days
9–10 Minors	75	1-15	15-40	40+
11–12 Minors	85	1-15	15-40	40+

### Majors Divisions Pitch Limits

WYBL manages 9-12 Majors pitchers' arm care through a progression that allows our young pitchers to gain more strength as the season develops. Pitchers who pitch in travel ball have a slightly different stairstep; coaches are encouraged to work together to communicate about their players' experience. (Drafts are a good opportunity.)

Appearance	Max pitches per game	Max pitches per game (travel pitchers)	Required Rest
1	30	40	2 days
2	30	40	2 days
3	40	50	3 days
4	40	50	3 days
5	50	60	4 days
6	50	60	4 days
7+	60	70	5 days

## Pitching Rules Applying to All 9–12 Leagues

Pitches shall be counted according to Baseball Rule 2.00—“A pitch is a ball delivered to the batter by the pitcher,” in addition to any pitches delivered to the batter ruled a “no pitch” by the umpire, e.g., a pitch delivered in error while the ball was dead.

If the pitcher reaches the pitchcount limit while facing a batter, the pitcher may continue to pitch until the batter reaches base safely or is put out. In a game suspended by darkness, weather, or other causes and resumed the following calendar day, the pitcher at the time the game was halted may continue to the extent of his or her eligibility. A pitcher’s eligibility in games rescheduled beyond the following calendar day shall be determined by the pitcher’s workload in that week. Arm care is the preeminent concern. A day rest shall be defined in “Days” starting at 12:01am and ending at 11:59 pm of the next calendar day.

The Official Scorekeeper on GameChanger shall be the “official pitch counter.” He or she shall maintain accurate counts for both team’s pitchers, which are presumptively correct. Managers shall submit any rare corrections to the League Coordinator within 24 hours. A pitcher’s own manager has the ultimate responsibility for knowing when his or her pitcher must be removed to meet the mandated rest requirements. The manager should inform the umpire-in-chief when his or her pitcher has delivered his/her maximum limit of pitches for the game, as noted above.

The withdrawal of an ineligible pitcher after that pitcher is announced, or after a preparatory (warm-up) pitch is delivered, but before that player has pitched a ball to a batter, shall not be considered a violation. Violations will be reported to the League Coordinator by the Official Scorekeeper. Repeated violations will be addressed by the Coordinator and WYBL Board and may include a manager’s suspension.

Games that are suspended, makeup games, and any innings played “unofficially,” that is, when the outcome is mathematically out of reach—see below—count toward a week’s innings and pitch count totals. One pitch in any inning constitutes a full inning pitched. These rules apply with equal force to WYBL playoff games.

### Protests

There are no protests under any circumstances. If there is a concern, please contact the league coordinator.

### Run-Per-Inning Limits; Ten-Run Rule

League	Max runs per inning
9–10 Minors	4
9–10 Majors	5
11–12 Minors	5
11–12 Majors	None

Games in the 9–10 Minors, 9–10 Majors, and 11–12 Minors are officially over when the losing team cannot make up the run differential and the game is an official game (3 ½ innings when home team is ahead, 4 innings when visitors are ahead). Any additional innings, which will be played at the discretion of the umpire-in-chief, do not count toward season run totals. Innings pitched and pitches thrown, however, will count toward a pitcher’s allotments in both categories.

The 11–12 Majors has a ten-run “mercy rule” after the 4th or any subsequent inning.

### **Additional Rules**

#### **Advancing to Home Plate in 9–10 Minors**

9–10 Minors may score only on a batted ball or a force play with the bases loaded.

#### **Base Stealing / Leads**

9–10 Minors, 9–10 Majors: Players may advance only when the ball has reached home plate. 11–12 Majors: Baseball rules apply. 11–12 Minors will play the following “modified open” lead:

1. There will be a 10-foot line placed past 1st, 2nd, and 3rd bases during field prep.
2. Runners may take a lead but may not cross the 10 foot line until the pitched ball crosses home plate or is put into play. The runner's feet must be stationary before the pitcher begins his delivery to the plate. In other words, the runner must not get a running start even if he does not cross the 10-foot line in so doing. (The runner may return to his base at any time.) If the ball is put into play and the umpire adjudges the runner to have gained an advantage, the penalty for this infraction is the same as a runner crossing the 10-foot line too early: The runner is OUT after a delayed dead ball. If the ball is not put into play—or no advantage is gained from the runner not being stationary at the time of the pitch—the umpires will warn the runner of the violation. Repeated warnings will result in an OUT.
3. The runner shall be allowed to steal after the ball crosses the plate.
4. If the runner advances before the ball crosses the plate or is put into play, it is a “delayed dead ball”; the umpires shall allow the play to conclude and then rule in the following manner:
  - A. The runner shall be called OUT.
  - B. If the runner is put out on a play at another base or tag play, the runner is OUT.
  - C. If the ball is put into play, the runner is OUT.
5. If the pitcher attempts a pick-off the runner may advance. NOTE: The purpose of the “modified open” rule is to help young pitchers develop confidence in attempting to hold runners on base in preparation for leagues with Open Bases.

### **Equipment**

Bats must be stamped with the USABats logo and may not exceed 33 inches in length.

Catchers must wear protective cups and one-piece, hockey-style helmets. Warm-up catchers both on the field and in the bullpen—to include coaches—must wear a mask. On deck batters must wear a helmet.

### **Coaches**

No one except eligible players in uniform, the manager, and not more than three coaches shall occupy the bench or dugout. Assistant coaches and their sons can only be selected through the draft.

### **Courtesy Runners**

A courtesy runner for the catcher may be used when the incoming catcher of record is on base with Two Outs. The courtesy runner shall be the player that recorded the last out. In addition, a substitute runner may be used for an injured player that has to be removed from the lineup for the remainder of the game. The substitute runner shall be the player that recorded the last out prior to the runner becoming injured.

### **Diamond Dimensions**

9–10 Divisions will play 46/60; 11–12 Divisions will play 50/70.

### **Dropped Third Strike—Rule 6.09(b)**

In the 9–10 Minors, 9–10 Majors, and 11–12 Minors, the “dropped third strike” rule is not in effect: The batter does not become a runner when a third strike called by the umpire is not caught. Baseball rule 6.09(b) is in effect in the 11–12 Majors.

### **Eight-Player Minimum; Penalty for Eight Players**

A team may start a game with a minimum of 8 players. An out will be recorded each time the ninth position in the batting order is “up.” A team that cannot field 8 players at the start of a game—or that falls below 8 players during it—forfeits. A ten minute grace period will be permitted at the start of the game.

### **Ejections**

If a player, coach, fan, or parent is ejected from a game, he or she will not be allowed to participate in the team’s following game. The person that is ejected may not view the current game AND the next game from any closer to the field than the paved parking lot. Managers shall report any ejection from their team to the League Coordinator within 24 hours.

### **Fake Bunt – Slash Bunt**

A batter is out for illegal action when the player fakes a bunt and then takes a full swing, thus eliminating a player from fake bunting (slap-hitting) the ball. Penalty: Batter is out, the ball is dead, no runners may advance.

### **Infield Fly—Rule 2.00**

The infield fly is not in effect in the 9–10 Minors. It applies in the other three divisions.

## **Intentional Walks**

An intentional base on balls may be given by the defensive team by having its catcher or coach request the umpire to award the batter first base. This may be done before pitching to the batter or on any ball and strike count. The umpire-in-chief shall declare the ball dead before making the award. The spirit of this rule seeks to limit pitch counts—not to encourage intentional walks. On the contrary, WYBL seeks to limit intentional walks to broadly accepted baseball situations. Coaches who have questions about this language should speak with their League Coordinator.

## **Playoffs—Timing and Tie-Breakers**

In the event the regular season cannot be completed due to weather, the playoffs will be played as scheduled. Playoffs are tentatively scheduled for the week immediately following the last scheduled regular season game (based on the original schedule and typically the last week of school). The following tie-breakers will be used for seeding if there is a tie in the regular season standings: 1. Head to Head 2. Fewest average runs per game allowed for the entire regular season for seeding. 3. Coin flip.

## **Substitutions**

Free defensive substitutions, except that the pitcher once removed from the mound may not return as pitcher in that game (see above). Each player must play six defensive outs in the first four innings of the game and everyone should sit once per game. “Bat the bench” is mandatory. Players arriving after lineups are turned in to the scorekeeper will be placed at bottom of the batting order. No fewer than eight and no more than nine defensive players shall be in the field.

## **Sliding**

The runner is out if he does not slide or avoid contact with a fielder in possession of the ball. The crucial variable is contact. If there is contact between a non-sliding runner and a defensive player with possession of the ball, the runner will be called out. The contact does not have to be deemed malicious or even intentional. If there is no contact, the runner is not required to slide, even if the defensive player has the ball well before a non-sliding runner gets to the base. If there is contact between a runner who is either sliding or not sliding and a fielder who does not have possession of the ball, the call may be “obstruction,” but on a close play where the baserunner and the thrown ball arrive at roughly the same time, the base-runner must slide or avoid contact with the fielder.

## **Thrown Bats**

A batter who throws his bat in such a manner that it hits the catcher or the Umpire shall receive a warning, which the Umpire-in-Chief will communicate to the batter’s Manager and the home team’s scorekeeper. If the same batter throws his bat in the same manner a second time during the same game, the ball is dead and the batter is out for interference. No runner may advance beyond his or her last legally occupied base at the time the bat was thrown.