



# 2024 RULE BOOK

## BASEBALL | Drafted Leagues

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# BRONCO

## 5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup> Grade

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### Section 1. Overall Rules

#### **LEAGUE INFORMATION**

Teams at this level can expect three interactions per week. The frequency of team activities may vary throughout the season due to playoffs, holidays, or weather.

Team standings will be collected throughout the season and updated on the PCBS website [www.pcbs.fun](http://www.pcbs.fun). Each season will conclude with a playoff tournament and championship game.

While competition is an element of the sport at this level, it remains secondary to teaching and fostering a love of the game. Managers, coaches, parents, and players are expected to promote a spirit of community, development, and fair play.

#### **MANAGER GUIDELINES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

1. Home team manager supplies 2 game balls for each game and reclaims them at the end of the game:
2. The home team is responsible for setting up the field equipment prior to the game and removal of the field equipment after the game. In addition, the home team is responsible for determining if the field is in playable condition.
3. Both teams should police the area for trash and debris.
4. The home team will occupy the third-base dugout.
5. The home team will have the field for 15 minutes of warm-up 35 minutes before game time. The visiting team will take the field for 15 minutes of warm-up 20 minutes prior to game time. Pregame practice should end 5 minutes before game time to allow for the pregame conference with the umpire. If there are less than 35 minutes available before the scheduled game start, teams are required to evenly split the field use for warm-ups until game time.
6. Home team managers must notify the umpire of game cancellations prior to the start of the game for the umpires to be canceled. Notification to umpires should be timely as the home team manager becomes aware of the cancellation, as umpires will receive half pay if they show up for a canceled game.
7. Managers should also inform the Umpire Coordinator if umpires show up late or not at all. This process must occur within 24 hours of the scheduled game.
8. Managers should supply team sponsors with a schedule of games.
9. Managers make sure that only league members practice or play with the team.
10. Complete PCBS issued uniforms are to be worn by players in all games, and in a proper manner (i.e., shirt tucked in, a hat worn properly, etc. - final determination rests with the umpires).
11. Managers select coaches, scorekeepers, and team parents. Team Parent can help with phone chains, organizing, after-game treats or making sure the field is cleaned up after each game. The players themselves should help in cleaning the field after the game.
12. Managers should make sure that their players do not fight, swear, argue with umpires, throw equipment, or engage in unsportsmanlike conduct. The umpire or manager for any offense, as deemed necessary can remove a player from the game. In addition, a player must be

immediately removed for any action he/she instigates deliberately meant to harm another player, coach, manager, or umpire.

13. Managers are required to keep accurate batting and pitching records *for both teams*. Each manager will be issued a scorebook for this purpose and is required to use it (or an equivalent electronic application) for each game. They will be useful in rating players at the end of the season. Rating sheets for each age group are to be turned over to the League Commissioner no later than Baseball/Softball Day.
14. Judgment calls by the umpire cannot be argued: only rule interpretation questions may be discussed with the umpire and only when time has been called or the ball is dead. All umpire decisions are final.
15. Managers are required to turn in equipment to the equipment coordinator on the day specified.
16. Managers, coaches, participants, and parents are prohibited from using tobacco products and alcoholic beverages on or near playing fields during PCBS sporting events provided by the Palatine Park District. Managers should discourage this same practice among parents and other spectators. This applies to parents and spectators as well.
17. A manager may not bring up a younger player to fill the roster if the younger player has a scheduled practice or game in his/her own league (if individual league permits). Managers must obtain permission from the younger player's manager prior to bringing them up one level to fill a spot on the roster for a game. The player called up must bat last and play the outfield each inning of the game. League Commissioners must be notified of any players called up prior to game time. Managers must not rely on any younger player on a regular basis.
18. If a player misses practice without a legitimate reason or pre-excusals, a manager may elect not to start the player in the next game; however, players must play the appropriate innings required.
19. A manager should not hold conferences with the umpire unless the opposing manager is invited to hear the discussion.
20. In the event of an injury, managers are responsible for seeing that injured players receive medical treatment, including transportation to the hospital if necessary, and complete incident forms.
21. Managers must remain at a practice or game until all players have been provided transportation home.
22. Managers will be held accountable for the behavior of all spectators.
23. All managers and coaches in PCBS programs should exemplify the PCBS *Code of Conduct*. In the event any player/manager/coach/spectator is ejected from the game, he/she is suspended for up to two additional games. The player/manager/coach/spectator will be given a note explaining what his/her options and penalties are along with a description of the process.
24. Managers are responsible for ensuring these guidelines and all PCBS rules are followed to the best of their ability and in a sportsmanlike manner. Failure to do so may result in a code of conduct violation.

## **FIELD RULES, LINE-UP, BATTING ORDER, AND SUBSTITUTIONS**

1. Each manager will provide his/her team line-up to the opposing manager prior to game time. The line-up will include last name, jersey number, and batting order. For leagues with minimum defensive inning requirements, *planned defensive positions of players should also be included*. Changes to planned defensive alignments are permitted, provided the manager complies with the specific playing time and positioning rules for each league. Players arriving after line-ups are exchanged shall be inserted at the end of the original batting order.
2. The batting order shall be followed throughout the game without regard to which players are assigned defensive positions during the prior half-inning.
3. Free substitution is allowed for any defensive player, except baseball pitchers in drafted leagues, when the ball is dead, or when time has been called. Substitutions need not be announced to

the umpire or opposing manager. Managers are encouraged to rotate players to various defensive positions.

4. No player shall sit out 2 full innings (unless due to injury or illness) during any game before every other player on the team has sat at least one full inning. In other words, no player shall sit their second inning until every player has sat their first inning.
5. In leagues where leadoffs are not allowed, outfielders must be positioned a minimum of 10 feet behind the baselines when the pitcher delivers the ball to home. Umpires will use their best judgment in determining outfielder positions in cases where the infield is too large for the age group playing. Umpires will issue one warning to teams that are in violation. Subsequent offenses will result in the runner being awarded a base This should be discussed during the pre-game conference between the umpires and the managers.

### **COMPLETE, CALLED, OR SUSPENDED GAMES**

1. The umpire(s) is responsible for halting the game due to darkness, rain, lightning, or other unusual conditions.
2. Leagues with run limits - If an inning ends within 15 minutes of the time limit, the next inning is deemed to be the last inning therefore allowing unlimited runs by both teams. If time allows for additional innings, unlimited runs will be allowed for each subsequent inning.
3. The Palatine Park District has Strike Guard Lighting Warning systems at specific parks (detailed information on the systems' operations and locations can be found on both the PPD and PCBS websites). It is expected that when actual lightning strikes have been detected (no false alarms) within the warning area, the park systems in that zone will provide a warning. When lightning has been detected, notice to take shelter is provided. One long (15-second) siren will sound, and a strobe will flash on the unit, and everyone should immediately seek shelter. After the Strike Guard System determines conditions are safe, (30 minutes of no lightning) the siren will sound three five-second intermittent blasts and the strobe will go off, providing notice that it is safe to resume activity in this area.
4. Every attempt should be made to continue the game if the Lightning system gives the all-clear and the umpire has not declared conditions as unplayable (field, darkness, etc.). Obviously, if the delay continues too long, a point will be reached where there won't be enough time to restart the game and get enough innings to make it a "complete game".
  - a. The minimum length of the delay is 30 minutes from the initial siren. If the all-clear siren (three five-second intermittent blasts) does NOT sound within 45 minutes of the initial siren, the game is considered suspended unless the requirements of an official game have been met.
  - b. Delayed games on weekends or at lighted fields should NOT restart within 30 minutes of the scheduled start time of the next scheduled game. If the all-clear siren does NOT sound before this 45-minute window is complete, the game is considered suspended unless the requirements of an official game have been met.
  - c. Resumed games will end either when called by the umpire (for example darkness) or at the start time of the next scheduled game.
  - d. If lighting is witnessed, or thunder is heard, and the siren has not sounded (if at a park with a system) or if not heard (if at a remote site), the game should stop immediately, regardless of the inning. All participants should leave the field immediately. The game will be considered a suspended game unless the requirements of an official game have been met. No attempts should be made to "wait it out" as if the Strike Guard Lightning System were operating.
5. If weather or darkness interferes with play so the game is ended by the umpire it would be a regulation game as defined within each league; if it is not a regulation game the game is suspended.

6. Due to weather or darkness if a game is suspended it must be resumed at a later date. Scorebooks must be clearly marked. All details (score, innings, number of outs, players on base, count, pitcher, etc.) must be agreed upon by opposing managers before leaving the field.
7. When a game is tied at the end of regulation in a regular-season game, the game shall be declared a tie if the time limit has been reached. When a game is tied at the end of a playoff game, it shall go into extra innings until a decision is reached. If the game is suspended, the game resumes later at the point of suspension.
  - a. Resuming a Suspended Game: When resuming a suspended game, the following rules apply to players who (1) did not participate in the game before it was suspended or (2) participated in the game before it was suspended and are not present when the game is resumed:
    - i. In the event a player was not present for the first portion of the suspended game, the player may play, but must bat last in the original batting order.
    - ii. In the event a player was present for the first portion of the suspended game and not present when the suspended game is resumed, the player is bypassed in the order and there is no automatic out. If, when the game was suspended, Player A has a count and subsequently Player A is not present when the game resumes at a later date, the next batter (Player B) in the line-up shall bat with the existing count at the time the game was suspended. Should Player A return to the game after the game is resumed, Player A shall occupy their original spot in the order.
8. All games, except for playoff games that are tied, have a time limit. The time limit starts when the first pitch is thrown. No new inning shall begin 15 min before the time limit for each program. The end of an inning (the last out has been made) constitutes the beginning of the next inning (not when the fielders are in their playing positions). If the game has reached the minimum number of innings to make the game an official game at the point the time limit has been reached, the game shall be considered an official game. If it is not an official game when the time limit is reached, it is considered suspended and will be continued at a later date.
9. Playoff games are subject to the time limit except in the situation where the game would end in a tie. In such a circumstance, the game will be played until the end of the inning in which a winning team is determined.
  - a. Championship and Consolation Championship games are not subject to time limits and will play a full game length, as defined by the league until a winner is determined. Game suspension rules apply (e.g., due to lightning or darkness).
10. A team failing to field at least 8 uniformed players within 15 minutes after the scheduled starting time shall forfeit the game. When a game starts later than its scheduled start time, the time limit begins when the first pitch is thrown. IHSA penalties do not apply. In case of injury where the injury occurs during the game, a team may complete the game with a minimum of seven players without forfeiture.
11. Playing of illegal and ineligible players shall result in forfeiture of games in which such players participated.
12. Protests are not allowed once the umpire has left the field after game completion.

## Section 2. General Rules

### **PLAYING**

1. IHSA Rules shall apply to all PCBS games except as modified and noted by the current approved house rules.
2. Before each game, opposing managers should review the game and ground rules. Special field rules should be clarified.
3. League commissioners are empowered to impose penalties and sanctions, including suspensions and forfeiture of games, to ensure that league rules are followed. The PCBS Executive Board shall have the authority to affirm, modify, or overrule any such commissioner's ruling.
4. No swinging of bats except within the designated batter's box. On-deck circles are only allowed at Community, Gbur, Birchwood 2, Maple, and Osage as permitted within league rules.
5. At all fields permitting on-deck circles – only one on-deck batter is allowed on the field of play in the designated area, provided the batter is in the on-deck circle directly behind the batter.

### **PITCHING**

1. As soon as a pitcher delivers 1 pitch to a batter, the pitcher is considered as having pitched 1 full inning against their weekly pitching allotment only. 1 pitch is not considered a full inning in leagues with minimum innings/outs requirements.
2. A pitcher who has been replaced by a substitute may not re-enter the game at the pitching position but may play any other defensive position.
3. A starting or relief pitcher shall be allowed no more than 8 warm-up pitches. Pitchers continuing in subsequent innings shall be allowed no more than 5 warm-up pitches.
4. For leagues with pitching limits, the pitching week is defined from 12:01 a.m. Monday to 12:00 midnight the following Sunday. Teams are required to submit a pitching record of which player pitched which innings for both teams.

### **BASERUNNING**

1. Runners must slide or otherwise attempt to avoid contact at any base where the defensive player has or is about to receive the ball to make a play. Runners do not have to slide if no play is being made at the base. This is solely a judgment call by the umpire. Any fielder faking a catch to induce a runner to slide or impede a runner's progress must be warned immediately and removed from the game for a second offense.

### **BATTING**

1. A batter is out if he or she fakes a bunt and swings away. The batter is out whether or not the ball is hit. The ball is dead, and all runners must return to the base they previously occupied.
2. A team will be given one warning for a player throwing a bat unintentionally. After that initial infraction, the team will be assessed an out for each additional bat-throwing incident.
3. Illegal Bats:
  - a. If an illegal bat is suspected, the manager must protest the play to the umpire before the next pitch is made to the next batter. If the protest is made during or after the "at bat" and the bat is found to be illegal, then the player is out.
  - b. The use of an illegal bat is to be reported within 24 hours to the League Commissioner. Teams found to be using an illegal bat will be subject to disciplinary action. The first team infraction of the season will result in a warning to the team and the manager. The second team infraction of the season will result in a one-game suspension of the manager. Subsequent team infractions will result in additional disciplinary action to be determined by the League Commissioner

## EQUIPMENT

1. All batters and runners must wear approved protective helmets. Any player assisting in the coach's box must wear a helmet. All IHSA helmet rules apply. Any runner removing his or her helmet before touching home plate while the ball is in play shall be called out.
2. Batters in any league may wear helmets with manufactured facemasks or faceguards attached.
3. All catchers must wear chest protectors, helmets, masks, shin guards, and cups when catching.
4. Intentional throwing of any equipment is cause for immediate ejection.
5. Any equipment judged by the umpire to be potentially dangerous is illegal. The wearing of any jewelry during practices and games is prohibited. All jewelry, including earrings, must be removed prior to a player participating in a practice or a game. Medical Alert and religious medals bracelets/necklaces are not considered jewelry. If worn, they must be taped to the body to remain visible.
6. All male players will wear a protective (hard) cup. No player will be allowed to play during a game if this rule is not met. It is the manager's responsibility to ensure that this rule is strictly enforced.
7. Bats rules:
  - a. We are aligned with the [Little League Baseball Bat rules](#).
  - b. All legal bats shall bear the USA Baseball or BBCOR logo signifying they meet those certifications. A simple chart and examples of acceptable logos are shown below.

PROGRAM	MAX LENGTH	MAX DIAMETER	DROP LIMIT	ALLOWED CERTIFICATIONS
T-Ball	26"	2-5/8"	None	USA
Rookies	33"	2-5/8"	None	USA
Future Stars	33"	2-5/8"	None	USA
Pinto	33"	2-5/8"	None	USA
Stallion	33"	2-5/8"	None	USA
Mustang	33"	2-5/8"	None	USA
Bronco	33"	2-5/8"	None	USA, BBCOR
Pony	34"	2-5/8"	None	USA, BBCOR
Colt	36"	2-5/8"	-3	BBCOR

**NOTE:**  
Wood bats are allowed in all programs listed above.



For additional information visit: [PCBS Information | Bat Rules](#)

## Section 3. Bronco Rules

### **GRADE LEVEL, TIME LIMITS, and FIELD DIMENSIONS**

The league a new player plays in is determined by their grade on April 1 of that season.

Program	Grade Level	Time Limits	Inning Limit	Base Distance	Home to Center of 2B	Pitching Distance
Bronco	5-6	2:00	7	70'	99'	48'

*\*Measurements are taken from the center of the bases except for home plate. Measurements are taken from the rear point of home plate to the front of the pitching rubber or to the center of the bases.*

*\*Prior to Memorial Day, weeknight games will be 6 innings in length, and no inning will start after 1 hour and 45 minutes of the start of the game. After Memorial Day and all Saturday games, no inning will start after 2 hours, and games are 7 innings in length*

### **FIELD RULES – LINE-UP, BATTING ORDER, AND SUBSTITUTIONS**

1. No player shall sit out 2 full innings (unless due to injury or illness) during any game before every other player on the team has sat at least one full inning. In other words, no player shall sit their second inning until every player has sat their first inning.
2. Each player must play a minimum of two innings at an infield position. The infield is defined as 1<sup>st</sup> base, 2<sup>nd</sup> base, shortstop, 3<sup>rd</sup> base, catcher, and pitcher. One of these infield plays must occur before the end of the 4<sup>th</sup> inning. Free substitution is permitted.
3. All players always rotate in the batting order unless injured, ill, or taken out for unsportsmanlike conduct.
4. Any player arriving after the game has commenced will be placed in the LAST position in the batting order. The team manager has the responsibility of notifying the opposing manager immediately that a player has arrived and will be inserted in the batting order.
5. A manager may not insert a player in the line-up with the intent of him arriving by the time he/she is scheduled to bat or field. The line-up consists of only players present at the time the game starts.
6. If a manager knows only 8 players will be available for a game, a request may be made to use 1 to 3 players from the next league down to achieve a full roster of 9 players. Consent must be obtained from the player's manager and the Commissioners. Failure to obtain the consent of the player's manager prior to the start of the game makes the player ineligible and, as such, will result in forfeiture of the game in which the player participated. The substitute player(s) may only play the outfield and must bat last. The substitute(s) must play 2 innings and bat the whole game, regardless of if the team is at full strength to start the game. The League Commissioner should not allow any manager to rely on the same substitute player on a regular basis.
7. Each team must field at least 8 players to begin a game. There is no penalty for a team dropping down to 7 players during a game.
8. Fields with on-deck circles – only one on deck batter is allowed on the field of play in a designated area provided the batter is in the on-deck circle directly behind the batter.

### **COMPLETE, CALLED, OR SUSPENDED GAMES**

1. Prior to Memorial Day, weeknight games will be 6 innings in length, and no inning will start after 1 hour and 45 minutes of the start of the game. After Memorial Day and all Saturday games, no inning will start after 2 hours, and games are 7 innings in length.
2. The first three innings are considered complete when 3 outs have been made or 5 runs have scored. The fourth inning, and all subsequent innings, will be unlimited and subject to the Mercy Rule.
3. Mercy Rule: The game ends when one team is leading the other by 15 or more runs after 4 innings, or 12 or more runs after 5 innings, and the losing team has batted four or more complete innings and at least as many complete innings as the winning team.



4. If weather or darkness interferes with play so that the game is called (ended) by the umpire, it is a regulation/official game if 3.5 innings (6 inning game) or 4.5 innings (7 inning game) have been played and the home team is winning or 4 innings (6 inning game) or 5 innings (7 inning game) have been played and the visiting team is winning. If the game is tied after 4 full innings (6 inning game) or 5 innings (7 inning game) it is considered a suspended game.

## **PLAYING**

1. Infield fly rule applies. An infield fly is a fair (in the playing field) fly (not including a line drive or bunt) that can be caught by an infielder with ordinary effort (this rule does NOT preclude an outfielder from making the catch) and provided that the hit is made before 2 are out and at the time when first and second or all bases are occupied.
2. Offensive conferences are to be requested by the manager or coach to the umpire. One offensive conference is allowed per inning.

## **PITCHING**

1. A Bronco 6th grade pitcher may pitch in no more than 4 innings in 1 day (3 innings in a 6-inning game) and no more than 10 innings in a pitching week.
3. A Bronco 5th grade pitcher may pitch in no more than 3 innings in 1 day (3 innings in a game) and no more than 9 innings in a pitching week.
4. A pitcher may not pitch on back-to-back days. A pitcher pitching on Monday would next be eligible to pitch on Wednesday and then again on Friday.
5. With the combined age groups, teams must pitch a 5th grader a minimum of 2 full innings. An inning is constituted by either 3 outs or reaching the 5-run limit. Collectively, 5th grade pitcher(s) must pitch a total of 6 outs or two 5-run limit innings.
6. Pitching an ineligible pitcher and/or failing to pitch a 5th grader the minimum 2 innings by the game's completion will constitute a forfeit.
7. Each pitcher receives only one balk warning or illegal pitch warning without a penalty.
8. Umpires should call time out and instruct the manager and pitcher as to the legal use of the mound when a balk occurs. Pitchers must not be allowed to gain an advantage from illegal pitches or motions.
9. The defensive team may give an intentional walk by having the catcher or coach request the umpire award first base to the batter. This may be done before pitching to the batter or on any ball and strike count. The ball is dead during the award.
10. One visit per pitcher per inning is allowed. On the second visit, the pitcher must be removed. Any defensive conference between a coach and player(s) counts as a visit to the pitcher. A defensive visit for an injury, with the approval of the umpire, does not count as a visit.
11. **If a pitcher hits 2 batters in an inning, or 3 batters in a game (provided the pitched ball was not in the strike zone) the pitcher must be removed from the pitcher position for the remainder of the game.**
12. Curveballs or other breaking pitches are not permitted. Any curveball thrown by the pitcher is to be considered a delayed dead ball and as such a "BALL" unless the offensive team gains an advantage from the pitch. The umpire is to call time out and instruct the pitcher and both managers as to the infraction.

## **BASERUNNING**

1. **A courtesy runner may be used, to speed up the game.**
  - a. **For players at any time while on base if they are going to assume the pitcher's or catcher's position in the next half-inning. It is strongly encouraged with two outs for the next catcher to be able to put on their equipment.**
  - b. **For an injured runner.**
  - c. **Courtesy runners shall be determined as follows in order of precedence:**
    - i. **Last out of that half inning (excluding the pitcher/catcher)**
    - ii. **Last runner to score**
    - iii. **Last out of the previous inning**

2. Leadoffs are permitted on any base.
3. Runners may steal any base.

### **BATTING**

1. Any player faking a bunt and subsequently swinging away will be called out. This is a dead ball situation, and all base runners must return to the base occupied at the time of the pitch.

### **EQUIPMENT**

1. Regulation baseballs are used.
2. Metal cleats (spikes) are not allowed.

## **Section 4. Fall Bronco Rules**

*The PCBS fall Bronco league follows the same regular-season rules as the spring Bronco program, with rules exceptions noted below.*

1. No new inning may start after 2 hours on all games, with a maximum of 7 innings. Teams will finish the last inning started. Games may end in a tie.
2. Pitching limits for 6th graders are 3 innings per day, 8 innings per pitching week. Pitching limits for 5th graders are 2 innings per day, 6 innings per pitching week.
3. Call-up players are permitted only a team is unable to field a minimum of 9 players. For insurance purposes, the call-up must come from a registered PCBS Fall Ball Minors team for Palatine teams.
4. In the event a team is unable to secure a call-up, using opposing players for outfield positions is permitted for defensive purposes.

*Out-of-town teams:* Call-ups may come from a registered Minors Fall Ball team. Any call-ups are required to be covered by insurance to be eligible to participate.