

HAMPTON ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION

MINOR LEAGUE RULES 2009

(revised 02/13/08)

PURPOSE

The purpose of Minor League Baseball is to provide a transitional league for 7 & 8 year old boys or girls to bridge the gap between T-Ball and American League Baseball. It will be an instructional league that is somewhat non-competitive, where players are expected to improve their basic skills, as well as learn more rules consistent with real baseball. Score will be kept for the games, but player development, not scores, will be emphasized. However, **team standings for the Minor League teams will not be kept**. All players will receive a trophy at the end of the season.

OBJECTIVES

We will provide a controlled atmosphere in which all players have the opportunity to learn and have fun. We, as coaches, will abide by the rules. The rules are meant to enhance the performance of all the players. We will remember that the players are the center of attention. Please keep in mind that we are the role models. We will encourage the batters to swing the bat and be aggressive. Teach them if its close, hit it. Tell the players not to wait for the "perfect pitch". It may never come.

We will encourage the players to make the plays at the appropriate bases. Teach them to get the force-out at the closest base.

We will use a RIF (reduced injury factor) baseball for all practices and games.

TEAM SELECTION

Teams will consist of an even number of 7 & 8 year old players (1st & 2nd year Minor League players) or as close to even as possible based on the number of 7 & 8 year old players registered for the season.

PLAYER ROTATION

Each player must play a minimum of 2 innings in the infield. Catcher is not considered an infield position for this purpose.

PLAYERS

1. Players must be 7 or 8 years old.
2. Maximum of 10 players in the field with 4 outfielders positioned in an arc at least 20 feet behind the baselines.
3. All players in attendance must be in a consecutive batting order as determined by the manager.
4. Players arriving after the game has started will be added to the end of the batting order.

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5. All batters and base runners must wear helmets with facemasks.
6. All catchers must wear full equipment (cups should be encouraged). The catchers may use a fielder's glove.

THE GAME

7. A regulation game is 5 innings; the game may be called after 4 innings due to darkness and/or rain and declared a complete game.
8. **Nine pitches or 5 strikes per batter** (if needed). If the ninth pitch is fouled, then another pitch is awarded until the batter hits it fair or strikes out. If the batter swings and misses on the fifth strike or doesn't foul or put the ball in play on the ninth pitch, the batter is out.
9. An inning shall last either for 3 outs, **until 6 runs are scored**, or until all of the players on the batting team have had a chance to bat, whichever comes first.
10. **There will be no continuation of play. After the sixth run touches the plate, that half of the inning is over.**
11. **If at the end of the 5th inning, the score is tied, the game ends in a tie.**
12. **Should the home team be ahead after completion of the first half of the 5th inning, the home team will still bat. In this case, the bottom half of the 5th inning will end as defined in Rule #9 above.**

THE FIELD

13. The distance between the bases is 60 feet.
14. The pitcher's mound will be encircled by a chalk line with a diameter of 12 feet. The center of the circle is 44 feet from the plate.
15. A coach will pitch (overhand) to his own players from a distance of 35 feet. This distance is determined by the chalk line nearest home plate. A coach may pitch underhand to selected players to encourage greater participation.
16. A straight chalk line will be drawn halfway and perpendicular between first and second bases, second and third bases, and third base and home plate. Refer to general rule #30 for further explanation.
17. A chalk arc, 10 feet in front of home plate extending from foul line to foul line will be made to designate the "dead ball" hitting area.

GENERAL RULES

18. If batted ball strikes the pitching coach, the ball is ruled dead and the runners cannot advance. The pitch does not count as one of the batter's allotted pitches.
19. No bunting or check swings for the purpose of simulating bunts will be permitted.
20. No infield fly rule.
21. No base stealing.
22. No leadoffs or running before the ball is hit.
23. No headfirst slides into bases.

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24. A batter throwing the bat while hitting will be issued a warning for the first violation. The same batter committing a second violation during the game will be called out. When such an out is recorded, the ball is ruled dead and base runners cannot advance at the time of the violation.
25. The infielder playing the pitcher's position must begin each pitch completely within the pitcher's circle.
26. To encourage plays at bases, if an overthrow occurs at first or third base, the runners cannot advance. If the runners are more than halfway to the next base, they are awarded the next base as per General Rule #30.
27. To encourage plays made at bases, if the ball is hit into the outfield, the ball remains live until the ball is thrown back to second or third base. Base runners can advance at their own risk of being thrown out. Once the ball is thrown to second or third base and the runners are either safe or out at a base, play will be stopped and general Rule #30 will be applied.
28. When play is stopped, if a base runner is more than halfway to the next base (determined by the chalk lines between the bases), he is awarded that base. If less than halfway, he returns to the base that he last touched. The coach doing the pitching will determine this (keep an eye on the lead base runner). Please use discretion.
29. Coaches are not allowed to touch or assist base runners.
30. To encourage plays at bases, play is stopped and runners may no longer advance when:
 - (A) A ball is hit in the infield and batter and runner(s) advance one base; or batter and/or runner(s) are out on the play,
 - (B) An infielder overthrows first (1st), second (2nd), or third (3rd),
 - (C) The ball is thrown back into the infield after being hit into the outfield (the ball does not need to be caught by an infielder, the ball must just cross the base lines),
 - (D) The ball is run into the infield, or
 - (E) When the ball leaves the normal or safe field of play as determined by the coach(es).

The field will be chalked with hash marks halfway between all bases except home and first (1st) base. Base runners must safely advance or return to a base once the circumstances in (A) – (E) above occur. **A PLAY MAY BE MADE ON A RUNNER CAUGHT BETWEEN BASES EVEN AFTER THE BALL IS RETURNED TO THE INFIELD.** The runner must make the next base or return to the previous base safely. If the runner reaches the next base safely, the relationship between the runner and the hash mark at the time of the occurrence of circumstances (A) – (E), whichever is the case, will determine which base the runner is entitled to. One full foot must be past the hash mark for the runner to be awarded the next base, provided the base is not already occupied. If the runners reach the next base, they cannot advance any further, even if a second overthrow occurs.

31. The Little League Rule Book prevails in all cases except for the above-mentioned rules.

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MANAGER'S / COACH'S RESPONSIBILITIES

32. Every team has a manager and three coaches. One possible scenario is to have the manager do the pitching, use two of the coaches as base coaches, and the third coach will man the bench area. When on defense, three coaches may be positioned around the outfield of the infield grass.
33. Home team manager is responsible for deciding if the field is playable. If you plan to postpone a game due to weather or poor field conditions, please call the opposing manager at least a half hour before game time.
34. Home team manager is responsible for calling the league commissioner to reschedule postponed games.
35. Home team manager is responsible for having the field in "game ready" condition, with bases tied down, and the field lined (mound, arc in front of home plate, base lines, perpendicular lines between bases).
36. The managers are responsible for cleaning up their bench area upon completion of the game.
37. The managers are responsible for the conduct of their coaches, players, player's parents and fans. Should any of the above be displaying unsportsmanlike behavior, the manager is expected to address this behavior.
38. Please teach your players to run on and off the field (hustle).
39. There will be zero tolerance to the use of tobacco and/or alcohol products while on the field with the children.
40. Elect a team rep ASAP. Let the team Rep be responsible for organizing a snack list for the conclusion of each game. Try to pick someone other than a manager / coach or spouse.
- 41. HAA Rule on Thunder / Lightning.**

Play shall be immediately ceased upon by any manager, coach, umpire, parent/guardian of a player reporting seeing lightning or hearing thunder. Such cessation will not be subject to discussion by the parties involved, nor will the circumstances of the game, such as the score at the time or impending league standings, play any role in the cessation of play. All parties shall wait no less than 30 minutes after suspension of play before the outcome of the game is determined. Notes: 1. Any offending parties of the above approved rule shall be subject to a hearing by the HAA Officers and respective League Commissioner to determine any disciplinary action to be taken."

This rule has been adopted to protect you and your children from a very unpredictable, lethal weather condition. Please help the league to enforce this rule.