

West Central Area Baseball League Rules Grades 3-8; 2025

General Baseball Rules:

1. National Federation of High School rules shall govern play, except where modified in this guidebook.
2. Each game is 6 innings in length. No inning should start after 1 hour and 45 minutes. Finish the inning of play before calling the game.
3. Play:
 - a. 3rd-6th Grade can play with up to 10 players, 4 must be outfielders, must bat the bench
 - b. 7th-8th Grade can play with 9 players, 3 must be outfielders, team can elect to bat only 10 players
4. Free substitution is allowed; pitchers may only re-enter the game once in the game.
5. Courtesy runners are allowed for catchers; the team must use the player that recorded the last out.
6. Teams can start the game with 8 players. If a player is ejected, that player shall be disqualified. The team can finish with 7 players. When the ejected player is up to bat, it is an automatic out.
7. 5 runs are allowed for each $\frac{1}{2}$ inning (including final inning); teams are allowed to finish the play up to 8 runs per $\frac{1}{2}$ inning.
8. Grade levels are current school year grades.
9. Zero Tolerance from parents, fans, and coaches for yelling / arguing with umpires.

General Game Equipment:

1. Unless modified here, all equipment shall be in accordance with specifications listed in the National Federation of High School Rulebook. Decisions made by the umpire regarding equipment are final.
2. All teams should wear numbered jerseys of identical color (highly recommended).
3. Metal spikes are NOT allowed for grades 3-6. 7th and 8th graders are allowed metal spikes unless playing at a town with a turf field.
4. Proper helmets must be worn while batting, base running and catching. Catchers warming up pitchers must wear a helmet and chest protector.
5. Knee, elbow, hand wrist, arm guard or brace made of plaster, metal or other hard substance, even though covered or insulated with soft padding, is illegal. A hinged brace, if properly covered/padded with NO metal protruding, is considered legal.
6. Each team must have a first-aid kit.
7. Use DOL-I or equivalent baseball.

Bats:

Bats with one-piece rubber grip and knob combination shall be considered illegal.

3rd-4th grade - Bats must be 2 5/8" or smaller

5th-6th grade - Bats must be 2 1/4" with no restrictions or 2 1/2", 2 5/8" and 2 3/4" or less with a drop 10 weight differential.

7th-8th grade - Bats must have a drop 3 weight differential and BBCOR Certified

Pre-Game:

1. Both coaches and umpire must talk before the game to go over any questions before the game can start.
2. A Ten-minute grace period shall be allowed before the game before it is declared a forfeit.

The Game:

1. Pitching/Base lengths:
 - 3rd-4th grade: 65' bases; 46' mound
 - 5th-6th grade: 75' bases; 52' mound
 - 7th-8th grade: 90' bases; 60'6" mound

2. Number of innings a pitcher can pitch in one night:
(ONE PITCH THROWN IN ONE INNING, COUNTS FOR ONE INNING PITCHED)
3rd-4th grade 2 innings per night
5th-6th grade 3 innings per night
7th-8th grade pitching follows the USA Baseball guidelines.

Required Days of Rest	Number of Pitches
0	1-25
1	26-35
2	36-60
3	61-85

Daily Max: 85 Coaches should compare pitch count after each ½ inning

- Once the limit is reached a pitcher may finish pitching to that batter
 - One day of rest is required if pitcher pitches two straight days.
 - Days of rest are measured in calendar days, not 24-hour periods. If a player throws 55 pitches on Monday, they are not able to pitch on either Tuesday or Wednesday but could pitch again anytime on Thursday.
 - Only pitches thrown to a batter count toward the pitch count.
3. Legal pitches: fastballs, straight changeups, palm balls and knuckle balls. All other pitches (including, but not limited to, knuckle curves, curve balls, sliders etc.) shall be considered illegal. The 1st offense equals a warning, 2nd offense the pitcher and head coach are disqualified for the remainder of the game/night.
 4. Balks will not be called unless the umpire judges the pitcher is being intentionally deceptive. Fake pitch – dead ball, all runners advance on base.
 5. Runners must slide on any close play at the plate in all age groups. It's the players' discretion to slide feet first or hands first. The catcher must not block the plate, must stand in front of the plate. If catcher is blocking the plate with or without the ball, runner is automatically safe.
 6. For 3rd/4th Grade, coaches may stand behind the plate and gather balls for the catcher to keep the game moving.

Stealing:

3rd -4th grade

1. NO Stealing or leading off is allowed
2. Catcher cannot block the plate without the ball. If the catcher does, the base runner is automatically safe.

5th -6th grade

1. Leading off and stealing when the ball leaves the pitcher's hand, pass balls, balls thrown back to pitcher from teammates is considered a live ball. Players can steal home on a passed ball but must slide or they are automatically out. (even if there is no play on the ball, this is to avoid collisions at the plate)
2. Dropped 3rd strike – the batter is out but can advance to first base if first base is open.
 - a. If first base is open the batter must be tagged with the ball or the ball thrown down to first base for a force out. The ball is live.
 - b. If first base is occupied prior to the pitch, batter is automatically out.
 - c. The batter is out if they give themselves up, meaning they leave the batters box and are headed toward their dugout. Just turning toward the dugout is not an automatic out.

7th – 8th Grade:

1. Normal high school rules apply

Bunting:

3rd-4th grade: No

5th-6th grade: yes, 3rd foul ball is an out

7th-8th grade: yes, 3rd foul ball is an out