

HSA BASEBALL 7-8 Age Group

Field Dimensions

The diamond will have sixty (60) foot base lines. Second base will be located 84 feet 10 inches from home plate to the back of 2nd base.

The pitcher's plate will be thirty-five (35) feet from home plate.

Left field and right field foul lines will be marked.

The batter's box will be rectangular, six feet (6) by the three feet (3). The inside line will be parallel to and four inches away from the side of home plate. It must extend forward from the center of home plate 3feet and to the rear.

A six (6) foot diameter on deck circle will be provided for each team.

All players must remain seated in the dugout when they are not playing.

Equipment

HSA issued team shirts and hats must be worn by all players while on the field. Players must provide their own baseball pants and socks to be worn at all times while on the field.

All male players must wear an athletic supporter.

The catcher must use a catcher's mitt, and HSA will provide a chest protector, shin guards, and a catcher's helmet with a mask that catchers **MUST** wear during play. Catchers warming up pitchers, on or off the field, **MUST** wear a catcher's mask.

NOCSA approved batting helmets must be worn by the batter, on deck batter, all base runners and youth coaches. These will be provided by HSA.

Shoes with metals spikes or cleats are not permitted. Shoes with molded cleats are permissible.

All bats must meet Pony League specifications & standards, with a maximum barrel size of 2 ½".

A "Tee-Ball" will be used during games, and 7 game balls will be supplied by the home team.

All bases, pitching rubber and pitching machine will be provided by the home team.

All equipment must be returned to the HSA equipment shed after the last game of the season.

Games

Games will be played per schedule. No inning will begin after 1:30 into the game.

A regulation game consists of five (5) innings.

Each half inning will consist of three (3) outs or five (5) runs whichever occurs first.

Games results will not be kept. The object of the game is not to win or lose, but to have fun learning how to play the game and developing the player's skills. Winning should not be emphasized, but learning and improving a child's skill level will make them successful.

If a game is called for any reason, it shall be a complete game if three innings have been completed.

If a game is called for any reason before it is a complete game it shall be considered a suspended game and shall be resumed from the point of curtailment at the time scheduled by the Baseball Commissioner.

No inning of a game may start, for any reason, within 10 minutes of the scheduled starting time of the next game on that field. If only one game is scheduled, the games will be played to completion subject to the coaches and umpires decision relative to darkness or safety.

Rescheduling of suspended games must be arranged through the Baseball Commissioner. The league will determine the time and place.

The home team will always occupy the 3rd base side of the field.

Positions & Playing Time

A legal team can be represented by a minimum of 8 players. If either team has less than 8 players, an attempt should be made to balance the teams so the game may be played.

A maximum of 9 players can be on the field at a time.

Each player must play at least three (3) innings in the field. Each player must bat as scheduled within the line-up prepared before the game. Note: Each player is given a batting position regardless if he/she plays in the field or sits out an inning.

Except for the catcher, no player may play more than two (2) innings at the same

position.

Fielders must play in their designated position until the ball is hit. Over-loading fielders to one side of the field is not allowed.

Batting

A batter is out if he/she throws the bat a second time. The first thrown bat will be accompanied by a warning. The umpire's decision is final.

There are no walks. A player will receive a maximum of 6 pitches during an at bat. If they do not put the ball in play, on the 6th pitch the batter is declared out. Exception: If a batter hits a foul ball on the 6th pitch, they will receive a 7th pitch. If a batter does not put the ball in play on the 7th pitch, the batter is declared out.

There will be no bunting.

A batter will not be awarded 1st base when hit by a pitched ball.

A dropped 3rd strike rule is not in effect.

Base Running

All bases must be held until the ball is batted. There will be no lead-offs or base stealing. If runners leave a base when a ball is hit foul, he/she will be required to completely return to the base and touch the base.

Base runners must tag up on caught fly balls or they will be called out. On any overthrow that goes into foul territory, the base runner is allowed to advance only one base.

The infield fly rule will NOT be in effect.

Players must be encouraged to slide into a base where a play is being made. If a runner should collide with a fielder who is attempting to catch a thrown ball, and the runner did not slide or try to avoid contact with the fielder (umpire's judgment), the runner will be called out. In addition, a player may be ejected if he/she has deliberately attempted to cause injury to an opposing player.

Courtesy Runners: A courtesy runner may be used to run in place of the catcher if there are two outs and the catcher is a base runner. The courtesy runner chosen shall be a player currently not in the game at a defensive position. If there are no players available then the runner shall be the player who made the last (second) out of the current inning. Other than an injury, this is the only circumstance in which a courtesy runner may be used during a game.

Pitching

Coaches will use supplied pitching machine the entire game and will pitch to their own team. Rotation of pitching coaches is permitted during the game. The coach will start with 7 baseballs for each batter. The catcher will place the pitched balls behind him/her until the 7th pitch has been thrown. The catcher will then throw the last pitch back to his/her teammate playing the pitchers position. The adult catchers coach will throw the other balls back to the adult pitcher to help speed the game along.

The coach will pitch a maximum of 7 pitches to a batter. The batter must put the ball in play by the conclusion of the 7th pitch. If the ball is not in play after the 7th pitch the player is out. There are no strikeouts and no walks. Under no circumstances is a batter to receive more than 7 pitches during an at bat. This is not a negotiable point for two opposing coaches to agree to an increase in the number of pitches.

The ball is considered dead if touched by the adult pitcher in any fielding situation. Adult pitchers are only allowed to pitch. The team member playing the pitching position is required to field the ball. If the adult pitcher touches the ball, the play must be repeated (note: this is the only time a player may receive an 8th pitch).

The player at the pitching position when the coach is pitching will stand within three (3) steps to the side of the coach. Right-handed players will stand to the right and the left-handed player will stand to the left.

Placement of the Pitching Machine

Games will be played with the pitching machine placed from 30 to 35 feet from the front of the plate, (or the closest approximation of this distance that allows for consistent strikes - the location of the pitching mound may make a closer distance necessary in order for the ball to travel with a level flight). A five-foot diameter (Safety Circle) will be drawn around the machine.

The machine may be adjusted for accuracy during the game at the umpire's discretion, and with an effort to not prolong play with excessive adjustments. All adjustments should be made in order to maintain the 35-foot distance and consistent strikes. The Commissioner may at any point during the season request that machines from any and or all teams be recalibrate to maintain performance consistent with the aforementioned settings.

The Pitching Machine and Safety Circle

A batted ball that hits the pitching machine is ruled dead by the umpire. The batter is awarded first base. Runners advance if forced.

A batted ball that is popped up and lands and comes to rest in the safety circle that does not touch anything associated with the machine is ruled a dead ball by the umpire

and the batter is not charged with a pitch.

A batted ball that is popped up, lands in the safety circle but rolls or bounces out of the safety circle is a live ball.

A batted ball that rolls untouched into the safety circle and comes to rest there is a dead ball and the batter is awarded first base. Runners advance if forced.

A batted ball that passes through the safety circle without hitting the machine is a live ball.

If any player crosses the safety circle during play or deflects or throws a live ball into the circle where it then comes to rest, the umpire will halt play and award the runners the next base to which the base runner was headed. Entering the safety circle includes stepping into, falling into, and/or placing any part of the player inside the circle. Additional bases may be awarded per the umpire's judgment for extra base hits or intentional safety circle violations.

A thrown ball that deflects off the pitching machine and exits the safety circle is a live ball.

The Adult Pitcher

The adult who loads the pitching machine is referred to in these rules as the "Adult Pitcher." After a ball is put into play by a batter, the adult pitcher must make a continuous effort to leave the field of play in a manner that does not interfere with the hit itself or the ensuing defensive play by the fielders. It is recommended that the pitcher leave the field of play in the opposite direction of the play being made by the defense. In the event of loaded bases leaving the field in any direction may possibly interfere with play. In that event the adult pitcher will make every possible effort to not interfere with play. While the play is live the adult pitcher will not participate in coaching the players.

A batted ball that hits the adult pitcher will be considered a dead ball – no runners will advance and the batter will return to the batter's box to resume his/her at bat. The batter will not be charged with one of his/her allotted pitches for that at bat.

Coaching

The batting team is allowed the following coaches: on deck coach, pitching coach, first base coach, and third base coach. All other coaches must remain within the dugout area and supervise the remaining players (both seated and immediate batters).

The fielding team is allowed two (2) coaches on the field. All other coaches for the fielding team must remain within the dugout area and supervise the remaining players.

The head coach is responsible for maintaining order on the sideline and keeping

equipment and players seated behind bench lines (dugout). Batting helmets and bats should be kept by the on deck circle, away from the dug out.

All coaching must be positive and instructional, not vulgar, critical or demeaning. Coaches who are abusive to players must be reported to the Baseball Commissioner. Continued abusive behavior will not be tolerated. Coaches must stay cool. Don't embarrass yourself or HSA by creating a scene on the field. Set a good example of sportsmanship in all game situations.

Any coaches who will not adhere to the HSA rules, policies and philosophy should plan on being a spectator. Coaches are not permitted to smoke or chew tobacco products during games or practices.

Umpire

No umpires will be provided by the league for this age group.

The base coaches will serve as the umpires for making safe/out calls on the bases and determining fair/foul balls.

The catchers coach will make all safe/out calls at home plate.