



## **Rookie Ball House League Rules**

### **OFFICIAL RULES**

The playing rules for all scheduled games shall be the “Official Rules of Baseball”, except as detailed below:

### **GENERAL GAME RULES**

- There will be no forfeits of games because of lack of players from either team.
- Every player must play an infield position at least once per game.
- Coaches must make every effort to distribute the infield and outfield positioning as fairly as possible among the players over the course of the game.
- Players may not play the same position twice in any game.
- No more than 5 players may play in the outfield in any game.
- Best efforts will be made to ensure that no player shall sit in the same game OR in subsequent games until every other player on their team has sat once. This is House League - our mission is to develop EVERY player.
- Games are deemed complete if 3 innings are played, or 2.5 innings if the visiting team is behind after their third at bat.
- Tied games will be permitted during regular season games.

### **PLAYOFF RULES**

- o A team must have a minimum of 7 players for the game to start. If the team does not have the required number, then the team forfeits.
- o A forfeited playoff game will be recorded as a loss of 7-0.

- o In round robin play, ties are allowed. Points will be awarded as follows: 2 points for a win, 1 point for a tie, and 0 points for a loss.
- o In seeding: to break a tie, ahead-to-head analysis will determine the higher seed.
  - In this context, "head-to-head" means looking at the results of games between the tied teams. For example, if Team A and Team B have both won the same number of games in the round robin, but Team A won the game against Team B, Team A would be ranked higher.
- o In elimination games, there must be a winner. If the score is tied at the end of 3 innings, or reaches its time limit, one extra inning will be played. All normal game play rules apply.

### **DIAMOND SET UP**

- A circle, 8 feet in diameter with its center at 44 feet from the back of home plate will surround the pitching machine. The pitcher must stand beside the pitching machine outside the safety circle and behind the release point of the pitching machine. Lines shall be drawn from the release point to 4 feet beyond the circle. The pitcher must have both feet on the white line or within 4 feet behind the line until the ball is released from the machine. This means that pitchers are standing 8-12' from the pitching machine until the ball has been put in play.
- The machine speed will be set at 38 mph. A coach will operate the machine.
- Bases must be 65' apart.
- Mark a line in the dirt approximately mid-way between each base.

### **PITCHING RULES**

- If a batted ball hits the machine, equipment in the 8 foot circle, or the pitching coach, the ball is dead. The batter is awarded first base and any base runner forced to advance by this also moves one base as they would as if it were a "walk".
- The pitcher must stand outside the pitching machine circle on the same side as the batter and be wearing the designated pitcher's helmet. The pitcher must have both feet on the white line or within 4 feet behind the line until the ball is released from the machine. This means that pitchers are standing 8-12' from the pitching machine until the ball has been put in play.
- All batters are granted 5 pitches from the machine. A swing counts as a pitch regardless of whether it was hittable or not. A pitch that is deemed hittable but is not swung at will still count as a pitch.

- The umpire will declare a “no-pitch” on any ball that they deem was not hittable, unless swung at by the batter.
- A pitch is generally considered “unhittable” if it hits ground before the plate or crossed the plate at a level above the head of the player.

## BASERUNNING

- Leadoffs and stealing are not permitted.
- The umpire calls “time” after an infielder holds the ball in the air.
- “Time” will not be called if an outfielder is in possession of the ball, even if they are in the infield.
- Once “time” is called, any runner that is halfway or more to the next base (defined by a line drawn in the dirt) will be awarded that next base. Any runner that has yet to cross half way will be sent back to the previous base. This is at the umpires discretion. **IF THE UMPIRE MAKES A CALL THAT YOU THINK IS INCORRECT JUST LET IT BE. DO NOT ARGUE.**

## BATTING

- All players must bat each inning.
- Bunting is not permitted.
- Batting order must shift down by one batter each inning.

First Inning Order	Second Inning Order	Third Inning Order
1-2-3-4-5-6-7-8-9	2-3-4-5-6-7-8-9-1	3-4-5-6-7-8-9-1-2

- For a team batting players more than once in an inning (to equalize the number of at-bats to the opposing team with more players) the order must still shift down by one space beyond the last batter each inning [e.g., for a team with 8 batters, but needing 11 at-bats (3 players batting twice) per inning.

First Inning Order	Second Inning Order	Third Inning Order
1-2-3-4-5-6-7-8-1-2-3	4-5-6-7-8-1-2-3-4-5-6	7-8-1-2-3-4-5-6-7-8-1

## LAST BATTER

- The coach operating the pitching machine must clearly declare “last batter” and wait for clear sign of acknowledgement from the opposing team’s coach(es), and

allow ample time for them to communicate to their team before the at-bat can commence.

- To stop the play, the ball must be in possession of the catcher (or pitcher in the absence of a catcher) on the plate before the runners cross home plate.
  - Ball hit in front of pitching machine
    - Fielder may throw or hand the ball to the catcher.
  - Ball hit beyond pitching machine
    - MUST be thrown to the catcher from beyond the pitching machine, otherwise time will be called and all runs will score.
- There are no tag outs or forces at other bases on the last play.
- If the last batter hits into a fly out, then they are out. All runners who then properly tag up may score if they cross the plate before the catcher has possession of the ball on the plate. Any runners who crossed the plate but did not properly tag up will not score.
- If the last batter strikes out, the inning is over.
- If during the last batter, the batted ball hits the pitching machine, the pitch does not count and the batter gets to re-take that pitch.
- If during defensive play, a player or the ball enters the circle surrounding the pitching machine, the ball is declared dead and all runners score.

## **FIELDING**

- The infield fly rule does not apply.
- To encourage infield plays at first base and third base, there shall be no penalty for overthrows made by an infielder to either first base or third base.
  - In this context, “overthrow” is to include any balls thrown past, through or over the baseman, whether ending up in fair territory, foul territory or out of play.
- The umpire calls “time” after an infielder holds the ball in the air.
- “Time” will not be called if an outfielder is in possession of the ball, even if they are in the infield
- If during defensive play, a player or the ball enter the circle surrounding the pitching machine, the ball is declared dead and all runners including the batter advance to the base they were heading to.

## **CURFEW**

- The number of innings in a complete game will be 3 for all games.
- We will play with a “No New Inning (NNI)” 1 hour and 30 minute time limit for every game with a drop dead time of 1 hour and 45 minutes.
- An inning shall be deemed to have started immediately after the last out in the bottom of the previous inning has occurred.
- If the game is terminated because the drop dead time has been reached, the final score of the game shall be recorded as the score of the game as at the last completed full inning.
- Safety and common sense always prevail in declaring an in-progress game to end (e.g., for darkness or weather concerns). In this case, if the game has ended mid-inning, the score at the end of the last complete inning will be final.

## **ETIQUETTE**

- **Diamond set up** – both teams will help each other set up and put away the pitching machine and diamond.
- All players are expected to wear their full house league uniform to all games

## **DIAMOND SETUP**

<b>Division</b>	<b>Base Distances</b>	<b>Pitching Rubber Distances</b>
Rookie	65 feet	44 feet
Mosquito	65 feet	44 feet
Peewee	75 feet	50 feet
Bantam and Older	90 feet	60 feet 6 inches (Mound required)