

# *City of Hendersonville*

## *5u-6u Baseball League Rules*

*Updated 5/20/2025*

### **1.0 General Rules**

**1.1** Recreational League will follow official rules of Cal Ripken Baseball for 6 & under, except for these local league modifications. Open leagues will follow USSSA rules, unless stated otherwise.

#### **1.2 Field Set-up:**

<u>Division</u>	<u>Bases</u>	<u>Pitching Line</u>	<u>Mound</u>	<u>Pitching Circle</u>
5u & 6u	60'	24'	40'	10'

#### **1.3 Regulation Game:**

<u>Div</u>	<u>Innings</u>	<u>Time Limit</u>	<u>Max Runs / Inning</u>	<u>Run Rule</u>
5u	4	1:00	5	n/a
6u	4	1:00	5	n/a

#### **1.4 Playing Time and Defensive Restrictions**

	<u>Batting Lineup</u>	<u>Defensive Players</u>	<u>Playing Time Rules</u>	<u>Defensive Restrictions</u>	<u>Infield Playing Time Rule</u>
5u-6u	All	All	N/A	Yes	Yes

When “All” is specified, all players on each team will be in the batting lineup. The batting order can not be changed during the game. When “9 or 10 or all” is specified, each team may hit a 9 player lineup, or 10 w/ EH (USSSA 8.03-J), or they may hit all players present. The teams don’t have to do the same thing (for example, in a FBL-12u game, one team can hit 9 with 3 subs, and the other team can hit all players). Teams can’t change (from 9 to 10, from all to 10, etc) during a game (once the lineup card is turned in).

**1.5** A team may never play with less than the required number to start a game. Players who leave a game due to injury or any other reason may return to the lineup. Players who miss a turn at bat due to injury or any other reason will not be called out. If a runner must leave the game there is no penalty (and no courtesy runner). These players can return to the lineup, in their original position in the batting order.

**1.6** If a game is called due to rain or other act of God prior to reaching regulation game status, it will not be resumed from point of delay, it will be replayed. For our purposes it will be considered 2 full innings played for a 4 inning (5u or 6u) game.

#### **1.7 Lightning Detection :**

If the “Lightning Detection System” horn is blown, the fields and playing areas must be cleared. Play cannot begin until the horn is blown 3 times indicating the area is clear of lightning. Lightning delays will not extend beyond the official game clock.

**1.8** The home team will be designated on the schedule. The home team is to take the 3<sup>rd</sup> base dugout. The dugouts are not picked by first team to arrive.

**1.9** The home team will provide the official scorekeeper (can not be a coach on the field of play). If the home team can not provide an official scorekeeper, the other team has the option of being the home team.

**1.10** Coaches must have lineup prepared for official scorekeeper prior to the game, including players' last name, and uniform number.

**1.11** Players arriving after the game begins can only be added to the end of the lineup

## **2.0 Uniforms & Equipment**

**2.1** Players & at least (4) coaches will receive a jersey and hat. Each player will be responsible for their own socks, pants, and belt. Coaches are not required to wear a uniform.

**2.2** The league will provide each team with a bucket of practice balls, practice tee, and game balls. Players are welcomed to provide their own equipment as long as it meets the league requirements. Teams can decide on shared equipment. Teams/players are responsible for catchers gear and helmets.

**2.3** The league will provide each team with game balls. The home team is responsible for providing game balls. If a team does not have a sufficient supply of acceptable baseballs to start the game, the other team has the option of being the home team.

**2.4** Helmets with face guards are required to be worn by batters, runners, and on-deck batters (and player-pitchers in any coach pitch division and younger). Catchers must be equipped as defined by Cal Ripken rules. Catchers in 5u division are not required to wear protective gear, but are required to wear a catcher's helmet & mask or a batting helmet.

**2.5** Player-pitchers in 5u, 6u, 8u divisions are required to wear a helmet with a facemask.

**2.6** **Bats:** Maximum barrel diameter is 2 5/8" (All Bats must have a USA Baseball marking).

**For 5u/6u** USA Baseball T-Ball stamp required

## **3.0 Defense & Playing Time**

**3.1** All players play in the field every inning. All players on each team will be in the batting lineup, and all will hit. The batting order can not be changed during the game.

**3.2** Every player must play an infield position at least 1 complete inning each game (start and finish an inning). There are 5 infield positions for the definition of this rule: player-pitcher, 3b, 2b, 1b or shortstop (does not include catcher). This playing requirement must be completely satisfied in the first 3 innings of the game. A player may only be released from this requirement with a written release from the league, after a personal request from the player's parent.

**3.3** Teams must field a 6-man infield, consisting of a defensive pitcher, catcher, and 4 additional infielders. All other players play outfield, and they must remain in outfield until ball is hit. Outfield is defined as a minimum of 20 feet behind the baselines.

**3.4** Defensive pitcher must remain no closer to home plate than the coach-pitcher, and no further from home plate than the 46 foot pitching rubber, and also within 6 feet of an imaginary line connecting home plate and second base. He must remain in this position until the ball is hit. Infielders may not be positioned any closer than 5 feet inside the baseline, and may not move any closer until the ball is hit. When the batter is hitting from the tee, the defensive pitcher must be positioned in line with home plate and pitching rubber, and no closer than 30 feet from home plate until the ball is hit. Infielders may not be positioned more than 5 feet inside the baseline, and may not move closer until the ball is hit.

**3.5** Fielders are generally prohibited from making plays on baserunners out of their area.

- 1) Any ball hit in the infield (one that is not hit through and out of the infield) is still a LIVE ball, meaning an out can be recorded by the defense. Regardless of whether the ball is played for an out or not, the batter is awarded a single, and all baserunners may advance only one base, unless the batter or a baserunner makes an out during the play
- 2) Outfielders cannot make a play at any base or on any baserunner.
- 3) First basemen can make a force play at 1<sup>st</sup> base, tag a batter-runner between home and 1<sup>st</sup> base, tag a runner between 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> base, or make a play at home after backing up an errant throw at home.
- 4) Third basemen can make a force play at 3<sup>rd</sup> base or tag a runner between 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> and home.
- 5) Shortstop can make a force play at 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> base or tag a runner between 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup>.
- 6) Second basemen can make a force play at 2<sup>nd</sup> or 1<sup>st</sup> base or tag a runner between 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup>.
- 7) 2b or ss can make any kind of tag play at 2<sup>nd</sup>, on a thrown ball from another defensive player.
- 8) Catcher can make a force play at home or tag a runner between home and 1<sup>st</sup> or between 3<sup>rd</sup> and home.
- 9) Pitcher can make a tag or force play on the batter-runner at 1<sup>st</sup> base, a tag or force play on a runner between 3<sup>rd</sup> and home and can make a play at 3<sup>rd</sup> or home after backing up an errant throw at either base.

Making a play on a baserunner is defined as any action that affects the advancement of that runner. The above rules can not be circumvented simply because a fielder does not actually tag a runner. For example, having a second baseman run the ball to home plate to stop a runner is making a play on that runner, and a defensive violation.

**3.6** Penalty for defensive violations is an immediate dead ball, and all runners awarded the base they are advancing towards at the time of the violation. At a minimum, the batter is awarded 1<sup>st</sup> base and all runners advance 1 base from the time of the pitch. Players may be released from area requirements in run-down or overthrow situations, at the discretion of the umpire.

**3.7** Teams must start a game or play with less than 6 players in 5u & 6u divisions.

**3.8** Teams may borrow a maximum of 3 players, from the next younger division or from another team in their own division, including the team they are playing. Teams may not borrow players from an older league. Teams may only borrow enough players to bring their team to 9 players. Teams may not borrow players after a game begins unless to sub for another borrowed player.

**3.9** Teams may NOT borrow players that are not registered in the Hendersonville Parks Baseball League, regardless of age.

**3.10** All borrowed players must bat at the bottom of the order and play outfield, beginning in RF, then CF and LF if more than 1 player has been borrowed.

## **4.0 Hitting & Base Running**

**4.1** For the first two full innings, teams will bat only once through their entire line-ups. All bats after the third out or 5<sup>th</sup> run do not count toward the official score, but are strictly for participation.

**4.2** Inning 3 and forward will consist of three (3) outs or five (5) runs, whichever comes first.

**4.3** **6u Batting Rule:** Every batter will start coach-pitch, and 3 pitches will be delivered. If a fair ball is not hit within 3 pitches, the batter must hit off the tee, and he or she bats until a fair ball is hit. The tee must be placed directly on or in front of home plate, and the batter must hit from within the batter's box. There are no strikeouts or walks. When hitting from the tee, a batted ball must travel at least 5 feet from home plate to be considered a fair ball. If the batter hits the tee instead of the ball, it is also a foul ball.

**4.4** **5u T-Ball Batting Rule:** The batter hits off the tee until a fair ball is hit. There are no strikeouts or walks. A batted ball must travel at least 5 feet from home plate to be considered a fair ball (if it stops or is touched within 5 feet, it is foul).

**4.5** The coach is responsible for the placement of the tee, and the ball on the tee. The coach is responsible for the immediate removal of the tee from fair territory. A batting tee left in the field of play can be ruled interference by the offensive team.

**4.6** Bunting is not allowed in 5u & 6u. Batter is out and the ball is dead upon violation.

**4.7** The infield fly rule is not enforced.

**4.8** Courtesy runners are not allowed in 5u & 6u.

**4.9** Leadoffs are not allowed in 5u & 6u.

**4.10** Head first sliding is not allowed in 5u & 6u.

**4.11** Intentional walks are not allowed in 5u & 6u.

## **5.0 Coaching**

**5.1** Three (3) defensive coaches are allowed, and may be positioned anywhere on the field. A coach may be no closer to the batter than the player-pitcher. One coach may be positioned in foul territory behind home plate with the catcher. The defensive coaches can never make contact with the ball. Penalty for any violation is an immediate dead ball situation, with batter and runners awarded at least 1 base each, at the umpire's discretion.

**5.2** Four (4) offensive coaches are permitted, although no more than three are allowed at one time (one hitting coach and base coaches at 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> base). The two hitting coaches are the coach-pitcher and the batting tee coach, and only 1 hitting coach may be used at any one time. The coach-pitcher must leave the field during tee ball, and the batting tee coach must be positioned in foul ground behind home plate during coach pitch (the coach-pitcher and batting tee coach is usually the same coach).

**5.3** The **6u coach-pitcher** must pitch in a direct line from home plate to the pitching rubber, and from any distance between 15 and 46 feet from home plate (determined by the pivot foot upon release of the ball).

**5.4** A batted ball that makes contact with a coach-pitcher will always result in an immediate dead ball situation. Penalty - if the umpire judges that the coach-pitcher did not make an effort to avoid contact with the ball, the batter is ruled out. Otherwise, the pitch is replayed. The coach-pitcher may not make contact with or obstruct any defensive player or play (intentional or unintentional). The coach-pitcher is to move to foul territory immediately after the ball is hit, and remain out of play until time is called. Penalty – immediate dead ball and out(s) called at discretion of umpire. The coach-pitcher may coach a baserunner at home.

**5.5** Any other obstruction or interference by coaches not covered by these rules can be handled at the umpire’s discretion with a warning and or the removal of the coach for the duration of the game.

**5.6** Once the coach-pitcher has the ball and has entered the pitching area and the batter is in the batter’s box, the coach-pitcher may no longer verbally coach the batter or any current runners. The coach-pitcher may not give any verbal instruction to the batter after the pitch is thrown, until the ball is hit. Penalty – the ball is dead and the pitch is considered a strike on the batter. If last pitch or already 2 strikes on the batter, the batter is out. No runners may advance.

## **6.0 Umpires, Coaches, & Suspensions**

**6.1** After a batted ball, the umpire will stop play and call time as follows:

When any defensive player has control of the ball in the infield (fair or foul, within 10’ of any normal infield position or closer) ... AND the current lead runner has already stopped a legitimate advance **towards** the next base. Time is to be called immediately and the lead runner returned to the prior base touched.

Time is called immediately and all trail runners are advanced or returned to their closest base.

Time will not be called if the defensive player throws or loses possession of the ball.

Time out is called in this manner in all circumstances, including when the “last batter” is hitting.

**6.2** Any coach entering the field of play without being granted permission by the umpire in chief is subject to immediate ejection. Any coach, parent or player approaching an umpire in an aggressive or argumentative manner before or after a game will subject their entire team to disciplinary action. The umpire is not required to explain or address any assistant coach with respect to judgment or rule interpretations.

**6.3** Any coach, player, or parent ejected from a game is to completely vacate the facility, meaning the parking lot at a minimum, and completely out of sight. Failure to sufficiently vacate the area promptly is grounds for forfeiture and extensive suspension. Presence in the facility after an ejection is grounds for extensive suspension. Approaching an umpire anywhere in the complex after a game, for any reason, is grounds for extensive suspension.

**6.4** Any coach, player, or parent Ejected will result in a minimum one (1) game suspension.

**6.5** All coaches (Head & Assistant coaches) must submit a background check through the city prior to stepping on the field to help coach. If the head coach allows an assistant to coach on the field prior to submitting a background check, then the head coach will receive disciplinary action of a minimum 3 game suspension. If the head coach allows an assistant to coach without a background check a second time, the head

coach will be suspended for the remainder of the season, with the possibility of not being approved to be a head coach within any Parks leagues in future seasons.