

Hendersonville Baseball

8u Baseball League Rules

Updated on 5/20/2025

1.0 General Rules

1.1 Recreational League will follow official rules of Cal Ripken Baseball for 8 & 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>
8u Rec	60'	n/a	46'	10'

1.3 Regulation Game:

<u>Div</u>	<u>Innings</u>	<u>Time Limit</u>	<u>Max Runs / Inning</u>	<u>Run Rule</u>
8u	6	1:20	6	6 after 5, 11 after 4, 15 after 3

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>
8u REC	All	10	Yes	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 ONLY 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 3rd 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, heart guard, 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 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.

2.5 **Bats:** Maximum barrel diameter is 2 5/8" (All Bats must have a USA Baseball marking).
8u REC 2 5/8" barrel OK, no MAX OZ drop.

8u Specific Rules

3.0 Defense & Playing Time

3.1 10 players on the team are eligible to play defense at any time. Every player must play defense at least every other inning. For example, a player who does not play defense in the 1st inning must play defense in the 2nd inning. In this way, some players might play defense all the time, and all players will play defense at least half of the game. Players removed from the field during an inning, including the pitcher, (for any reason, including injury or to warm up in the bullpen) must return to defense in the next inning or be completely removed for the remainder of the game (defense and offense). If a player can't play his minimum defensive requirement, he is also out of the game on offense.

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. The 4 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.

3.5 Teams must start a game or play with less than 8 players in 8u divisions.

3.6 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.

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

3.8 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 All 8u players on each team will be in the batting lineup. The batting order can not be changed during the game.

4.2 8u Batting Rule: The batter is allowed 5 pitches to hit a fair ball. There are no called strikes or walks. A pitch hit foul or swung on and missed is a strike. The batter strikes out if he swings and misses a pitch with 2 strikes. Also, failure to make contact on the 5th pitch is a strikeout. A foul ball on the 5th pitch will earn the batter another pitch (the at-bat continues until he takes a pitch, swings and misses or hits a fair ball).

4.3 6 Max Runs Per Inning (8u and older divisions)

In all 8u and older divisions, each team hits until they make 3 outs or score 6 runs (teams can score a maximum of 6 runs in an inning). An inning that was inadvertently allowed to continue after 6 runs scored can be corrected by simply adjusting the runs scored to 6 (batters are never allowed to “hit again”).

4.4 Tie Games (all 8u and older divisions only)

If teams are tied at the end of an inning once time has expired, the game will end in a tie. No extra innings will be played.

4.5 Bunting - Only one bunt allowed per inning. If you do not use the bunt in the inning it does NOT carry over to the next innings. The batter may square to bunt and pull the bat back to take a pitch but cannot square and then swing away. Penalty: The batter will be called out and no runners may advance. Only players that have been properly coached on how to bunt should they be called upon to do so. Pitchers may not leave the circle early once a bunt is presented. The player pitcher must remain in the circle until the ball is bunted. Civitan spring baseball will enforce the Cal Ripken rule for a player pitcher that leaves the circle early. If a team has already used their one bunt in an inning and attempt a second bunt, the pitch that the bunt was attempted on or successfully bunted will be ruled a strike. Any runners that advance will be returned to the base they came from

4.6 The infield fly rule is not enforced.

4.7 Courtesy runners are not allowed in 8u.

4.8 Leadoffs are not allowed in 8u.

4.9 Head first sliding is not allowed in 8u.

4.10 Intentional walks are not allowed in 8u.

4.11 In all 8u and older divisions, teams can finish a game with as few as 8 players. Players who miss a turn at bat for any reason (including ejection) will be called out. Players who leave a game for any reason (except ejection) may return to the batting lineup as long as they are meeting their defensive playing requirements. If a team is down to 8 players, and a player leaves the game for any reason, the game is forfeited at that point.

Exception - if a batter can not finish a current at-bat or a runner must be removed from a base for any reason, and since no legal sub exists (since all players hit), the opposing coach may select a temporary sub (temp) from the bench (not including the current or on-deck batter, or any player(s) currently in the bullpen) to finish the inning, but the original player may not return to the game and the “temp” resumes his prior place in the lineup. If a “temp” is on base and is due to come to the on-deck circle, the opposing coach must select another “temp” at that time.

5.0 Coaching & Coach-Pitcher

5.1 Four (4) offensive coaches are permitted, although no more than three are allowed at one time (one coach-pitcher and base coaches at 1st and 3rd base).

5.2 The 8u Pitching Machine: The front cross bar of the pitching machine is placed at 46 ft from the rear point of home plate with a speed of 39 mph (+/- 1MPH). Only the umpires can stop play to adjust the pitching machine.

5.3 The Player Pitcher must have one foot in a circle with a 5 ft. radius behind the machine and remain stationary until the ball is hit.

5.4 Machine pitch coach must move into foul territory once a ball is batted into fair play and remain until time is called. On defense, no other coach is allowed on the field during play.

5.5 Either umpire is allowed to declare “no pitch” on any pitch in the at bat. To be deemed “no pitch” the ball should hit the dirt in front of the plate or be deemed over the head of the batter and unhittable. This is a JUDGEMENT CALL and can’t be questioned by the coaches.

5.6 Dead ball will occur if a fair ball hits any part of the pitching machine, sandbags, coach pitcher, or extra baseballs without touching any defensive player first, the ball is dead and the batter will be awarded first base. All other runners will return to the base they occupied before the ball was hit unless forced to advance as a result of the batter being awarded first base. If a fair ball is first touched by a defensive player and then hits any part of the pitching machine, it is a live ball. If the machine is hit by a thrown ball, it is a live ball.

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.