



# MUDSOCK YOUTH BASEBALL RULES

## 8U League

Board Approved: April 3, 2025 Last Modified: March 31, 2025

**1. LEAGUE OVERVIEW:** The 8U League is a competitive youth baseball league with up to three (3) divisions which are determined by player evaluations and drafts. One division (**8U Red**) will consist of **both 7- and 8-year olds**. The remaining two divisions will be split by age: **8U White** (8-year-olds **only**) and **7U White** (7 year-olds **only**). Players who do not participate in evaluations will automatically be placed in their age-specific White Division. These rules are in place to ensure fair play and must not be manipulated by coaches. If there is any uncertainty about a rule interpretation, the league commissioner must be consulted for clarification. During games, **umpires have the final authority** on all rule interpretation decisions. This is a youth recreational league (no contracts, no pro scouts). Set a positive example because young players are watching.

**1.1. Schedule:** Teams play one weekday and one Saturday game per week, with makeups for rainouts (if schedule permits). Pre-season practices (*if applicable*) are league scheduled. Coaches may schedule one practice per week in-season **through the league**.

**1.2. Uniforms:** Players must wear the full team uniform: **team shirt, team cap, baseball socks, and baseball pants**. Shirts must be tucked in. In cold weather, additional layers are allowed. Players out of uniform may still play unless the League Commissioner rules otherwise.

**1.3. Equipment**

**1.3.1. Ball:** A standard baseball will be used and provided by the league at equipment distribution. The home team supplies game balls.

**1.3.2. Bat:** **Only USA Certified Bats are permitted**, with no restriction on barrel diameter. Wood bats are also allowed. Refer to <https://usabat.com> for approved bats. If a batter uses an illegal bat after one (1) pitch has been delivered or puts a ball in play with an illegal bat, the batter is out and all baserunners must return to their original base. A coach suspecting an illegal bat must notify the umpire **before the next batter receives a pitch**.

**1.3.3. Glove:** All defensive players must wear a **glove**. Players must provide their own gloves for practices and games. **Only** a Catcher or First Baseman is allowed to wear a mitt.

**1.3.4. Helmet:** The league provides team helmets, so players don't need to buy their own.

**1.3.5. Spikes:** Metal spikes are **prohibited**.

## 2. CODE OF CONDUCT

**2.1. Coach's and Parent's Code:** Be a **positive role model**. Children learn more from your behavior than your words. Emphasize **enjoyment over pressure** in competition. Respect coaches, officials, and opponents. **Do not enter the field** unless requested by an official or coach. The use of **alcohol, tobacco, and profanity is strictly prohibited** on or around the field of play.

**2.2. Player's Code:** Play for the love of the game. Be **humble in victory, gracious in defeat**. Always **play fair** and **obey the rules**. Prioritize the team's success over individual goals. **Respect officials' decisions** (no unsportsmanlike conduct). Conduct yourself with **honor** and **dignity** at all times.

## 3. PLAYING FIELD

**3.1. Field Dimensions and Locations:** This league will play at sixty (60) foot base paths. Fields that accommodate these dimensions are: Billericay Park (Fields 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8), Harrison Thompson Park (Fields 1 and 2), and Holland Park (Fields 1 and 2).

**3.1.1. Movable bases/plates:** Bases and home plate are movable at fields identified in §3.1.

- **Billericay Park Fields #3 & #4:** Bases: 60', 65', or 70'; Home Plate to Mound: 46' or 50'.

- **Billericay Park Fields #5 thru #8:** Bases: 60' or 65'; Home Plate to Mound: Not Adjustable.

- **Harrison Thompson Park #1 & #2:** Bases: 60' or 65'; Home Plate to Mound: Not Adjustable.

- **Holland Park Fields #1 & #2:** Bases: 60' or 65'; Home Plate to Mound: Not Adjustable.

**3.1.2. Mound to Home Plate Distance:** Must measure 46' from the back point of home plate to the front edge of the pitching mound rubber.

**3.1.3. Bases:** Base paths measure sixty (60) feet.



# MUDSOCK YOUTH BASEBALL RULES

## 8U League

- 3.2. **Dugout Assignments:** The Home team will occupy the 3rd Base dugout, and the visiting team will occupy the 1st Base dugout. League schedule will identify home and visiting teams.
- 3.3. **Field Maintenance**
  - 3.3.1. **Pre-Game:** The home team is responsible for field preparation. They shall remove tarps and use pillow bags/sponges to absorb water **before** applying field dry.
  - 3.3.2. **Post-Game:** The visiting team shall **cover the pitching mound** and **home plate** with tarps and return all field maintenance equipment to the equipment shed.
- 3.4. **Scoreboard Operation:** Scoreboards are not present at Harrison Thompson and Holland Parks. Scoreboards at Billericay Park are controlled by the “DAK Score” Smartphone App via a bluetooth connection on a smartphone or tablet. To operate the scoreboard, download the “DAK Score” app to a device and connect to the desired field.

## 4. ROSTER

- 4.1. **Official Team Roster:** Teams consist of **no more than 12 players** unless approved by the commissioner. Rosters are determined by a **player draft**, however, Commissioners may **add or move players** as needed.
- 4.2. **Forfeited Game:** A game will be forfeited if a team cannot field at least eight (8) players at the scheduled start time or within a 10-minute grace period. To avoid a forfeit, teams may use the Farm System (§4.3 Farm System) to bring their roster up to a maximum of nine (9) players. If a tenth player arrives after the first pitch has been thrown to the first batter, the Farm System player **may remain** in the lineup for the entire game. Farm System players are **only allowed to play in the outfield** and must be **placed at the bottom of the original batting order**.
- 4.3. **Farm System:**
  - 4.3.1. **Red Division:** Any current registered MYA Baseball Player that plays in the 8U or 7U White Divisions and/or 6U/5U League.
  - 4.3.2. **8U White Division:** Any current registered MYA Baseball Player that plays in the 7U White Division and/or 6U/5U League
  - 4.3.3. **7U White Division:** Any current registered MYA Baseball Player that plays in the 6U/5U League.

## 5. GAME OVERVIEW

- 5.1. **Pre-Game Warm-up:** Teams should arrive at the field **(30) thirty minutes before the scheduled start time**. If there is enough time, the visiting team will have the field for the first 15 minutes, followed by the home team for the last 15 minutes before the game begins. **If there are fewer than 15 minutes remaining before game time, no infield warm-ups will be allowed.**
- 5.2. **Length:** The game lasts six innings or 90 minutes (**whichever comes first**). No new inning starts **after** the time limit. If time expires mid-inning, play continues until the completion of the current inning unless the home team is ahead while batting, in which case the game ends immediately.
- 5.3. **Maximum Run Rule:** A team can score up to six (6) runs per inning with **no exceptions**.
- 5.4. **Run Rule:** The game will end early if a team is ahead by 10 or more runs after four (4) innings or 7 or more runs after five (5) innings.
- 5.5. **Playing Short:** A team must field at least eight (8) players or would be in violation of §4.2. If a team does field the eight (8) player minimum, no out will be recorded for the ninth batter's spot in the batting lineup.
- 5.6. **Fair Play/Guaranteed Playing Time:** All players must play at least **two (2) innings in the infield** within the first **four (4) innings**, except in cases of injury, illness, or disciplinary action. **Player safety is the top priority**. Coaches must not assign a player to a position where they are at risk of injury. If a player is not placed in an infield position due to safety concerns, the coach **must** discuss the decision with the **player's parents and the league commissioner**.
  - 5.6.1. At the end of **each half-inning**, **both coaches** must meet to review the upcoming defensive lineup to ensure compliance with §5.6



# MUDSOCK YOUTH BASEBALL RULES

## 8U League

- 5.7. **Drop Third Strike:** This rule is not applicable to this league.
- 5.8. **Infield Fly Rule:** This rule is not applicable to this league.
- 5.9. **Offensive Timeouts:** The coach may stop play for **only** one (1) batter per inning on offense.
- 5.10. **Umpire:** With no umpires in this league, coaches are responsible for making calls. The 1st Base Coach will handle calls at 1st base, the Coach-Pitcher will cover 2nd base, and the 3rd Base Coach will oversee 3rd base. For plays at home plate, either the Coach-Pitcher or the coach positioned behind the catcher will make the call. To maintain game flow, the offensive team should assign a coach behind the catcher to quickly return passed balls.
- 5.11. **Official Scorekeeper:** The home team is the official scorekeeper. The scorekeeper of both teams shall consult each other at the conclusion of each half inning. Any discrepancies at the end of the half inning must be resolved at that time. Any disputes will be handled by the league commissioner.
- 5.12. **Game Reporting:** Coaches must notify the commissioner if a game is canceled due to weather or darkness. Within 24 hours after the game ends, they must also report the final score (along with their team name and number), any farm players used, pitchers and their pitch counts, and any other important game details to the league Commissioner.
- 5.13. **Protests:** This rule is not applicable to this league.
- 5.14. **Weather**
  - 5.14.1. **Lightning and Thunder:** If lightning is seen or thunder is heard, the field **must be cleared immediately**. Players and fans must leave the field and return to their cars (dugouts are **not** allowed). The game is suspended for **30 minutes** from the last lightning strike or thunder. If play cannot resume **before the game's halfway time limit**, the game will be postponed or rescheduled. (See §5.2 and §5.16).  
**Note:** The game clock **does not stop** during weather delays once the game has started.
  - 5.14.2. **Rain:** As long as the field is deemed to be "playable", game play is allowed to continue. It is up to the discretion of **both coaches** to determine how "playable" is defined.
  - 5.14.3. **Suspended Game:** If a game is suspended due to weather or darkness, it will resume from the point of suspension and continue within the remaining time limit, if scheduling allows, unless a complete game (§5.16) has been reached.
- 5.15. **Ties:** If a game is tied when the time limit is reached, it ends in a tie. No extra time or rescheduling will be allowed. However, if six (6) innings are completed and time remains, extra innings can be played to determine a winner. In extra innings, the offensive team starts with one out and the last batted-out is placed on second base. §5.2 still applies.
- 5.16. **Complete Game:** A complete game is defined as the **completion of 2 innings**, (1 ½ innings if the home team is leading at that point). If the 2 complete-inning mark is not reached, coaches shall notify the league commissioner so the game can be rescheduled. The game will resume at the point in which the game was suspended, with the remaining game time.

## 6. BATTING

- 6.1. **Batting Order:** The batting order will remain consistent from inning to inning. Once a team's offensive inning has concluded, the next batter due up will lead off in their team's next offensive inning.
- 6.2. **Balls and Strikes:** A batter gets three swings and misses or a maximum of seven pitches, whichever comes first. If they foul off the seventh or later pitch, the at-bat continues until they put the ball in play, take a pitch, or miss a swing.
  - 6.2.1. **Strike Out:** A strikeout will be recorded if a batter swings three (3) times and misses, or a batter faces the maximum of seven (7) pitches and does not put the ball in play or foul the seventh pitch.
  - 6.2.2. **Walks:** There are no walks in this league.
- 6.3. **On Deck:** All players are to be in the dugout except for the batter and the on-deck hitter. The on-deck hitter must be wearing a helmet.
- 6.4. **Throwing-the-Bat:** Batter will be taught not to throw bat.



# MUDSOCK YOUTH BASEBALL RULES

## 8U League

- 6.5. **Bunting:** Bunting is **not** allowed in this league.
- 6.6. **Coaches on Field:** While batting, the hitting team will be allowed four (4) coaches on the field of play: 1B Coach, 3B Coach, Coach Pitcher, and a Coach Catching.
- 6.7. **Final Batter:** This rule is not applicable to this league.
- 6.8. **Injuries and Early Departures:** If a player becomes injured (as ruled by the umpire) and is unable to continue playing, his spot in the batting order **shall be skipped** with **no automatic out recorded**. Once the injured player leaves the batting order, he may **not** reenter the game.

## 7. FIELDING

- 7.1. **Fielding Positions:** All players will play defense each inning, using the entire roster. The defensive lineup includes one pitcher's helper, one catcher, four infielders (1B, 2B, SS, 3B), and the remaining players as outfielders. The pitcher's helper must wear a protective face mask, stay behind the plane of the coach-pitcher, and have at least one foot on the mound dirt when the pitch is thrown. Outfielders must remain in the grass, at least 10 feet from the infield dirt. No extra infielders are allowed.
- 7.2. **Shifts:** No fielding shifts are allowed in this league.
- 7.3. **Stopping the Runner:** A ball in play will be declared "dead" when **all** of the following are achieved: (1) The ball is in control of an infielder; (2) That infielder is standing with both feet on the infield dirt/grass; and (3) In the umpire/defensive coach's judgement, no further defensive play is imminent.
  - 7.3.1. **Note:** Runners who have passed the **halfway point between bases** when the ball is ruled dead **may advance**; those who **have not**, will **return** to the last base legally touched.
- 7.4. **Coaches on Field:** Two (2) coaches will be allowed on the field to help instruct during the defensive half of the inning. Coaches must position themselves in the outfield grass and not impede the view of any player.

## 8. BASE RUNNING

- 8.1. **Stealing:** Stealing is not allowed in this league.
- 8.2. **Head First Slides:** Head first slides are not allowed in this league. Coaches shall instruct kids on the proper technique of "feet-first" sliding.
- 8.3. **Lead-offs/Leaving Base Early:** There are no lead-offs in this league. Players are to keep at least one foot on the base until the ball is put into play.
- 8.4. **Over Throws:**
  - 8.4.1. **Red Division:** Runners can run an unlimited amount of bases in the event of an overthrown ball. Play is not stopped until §7.3 Stopping the Runner has been achieved.
  - 8.4.2. **8U White Division:** Runners are allowed to advance one base on an overthrow. If a play is made on the advancing runner, play will be deemed dead at the conclusion of the advancement of that runner. Additional bases cannot be taken by the advancing runner.
  - 8.4.3. **7U White Division:** Running on an overthrow is not allowed in this division.
- 8.5. **Speed-up Rule:** If a player (who will be the catcher in the next defensive inning for their team) is on base with two (2) outs, they may be replaced on base with a pinch runner. The pinch runner must be the last batted out.
- 8.6. **Defensive Obstruction:** If a batter-runner or base-runner is obstructed while within the base path, the obstructed base-runner will be deemed safe and the play is ruled dead. No further advancement of baserunners will be allowed.
- 8.7. **Offensive Interference:** If a batter or runner intentionally interferes with a thrown ball; or hinders a fielder attempting to make a play on a batted ball, he shall be declared out.
- 8.8. **Slide Rule:** There is **NOT** an automatic slide rule at each base. Runners are to avoid any intentional and/or malicious contact with the defensive player, and are strongly encouraged to slide in the event of a play. Any runner **not avoiding intentional or malicious contact** will be **called out**.



# MUDSOCK YOUTH BASEBALL RULES

## 8U League

**9. PITCHING:** This is a coach pitch league, therefore all rules applied to pitching are not applicable to this league. Any rules relating to maximum number of pitches, strikeouts and walks are contained within §6. **Batting** unless noted below.

**9.1. Pitch Count:** This rule is not applicable to this league.

**9.2. Required Rest (Calendar Days Midnight to Midnight):** This rule is not applicable to this league.

**9.3. Breaking Pitches:** This rule is not applicable to this league.

**9.4. Warm-ups (between innings):** This rule is not applicable to this league.

**9.5. Hit Batter:** This rule is not applicable to this league.

**9.6. Passed Ball:** This rule is not applicable to this league.

**9.7. Intentional Walks:** This rule is not applicable to this league.

**9.8. Coach Trips to Mound:** This rule is not applicable to this league.

**9.9. Coach Pitching:** Coach pitcher will be provided by the hitting team and must adhere to the these rules:

- The Coach-Pitcher must pitch overhand from a distance as outlined in §3.1.2.2
- There are no called strikes, walks, or hit batters during coach pitch
- Coach-Pitcher will pitch seven (7) pitches to the batter but may pitch more if a foul ball occurs on pitch number seven or any subsequent pitch (see §6.2. Balls and Strikes).

After the ball is hit, the coach-pitcher must avoid interference. If hit by a batted or thrown ball, the play is dead, runners return, and the batter continues. The pitcher's helper must keep one foot on the mound dirt and stay behind the plane of the coach-pitcher but can move freely after the pitch.

**9.10. Pitching Machine (If Applicable):**

- 9.10.1. Machine Setup and Operation:** Trained personnel must set up the pitching machine **pre-game**, with **speed and settings agreed upon by both coaches**. It should be tested for consistency before each inning or as needed. The **umpire** has the final say in disputes.
- 9.10.2. Pitching Machine Operator:** A designated operator, which shall be determined before the game (offensive coach, umpire, etc), is responsible for feeding the machine and may coach a batter between pitches but not while operating the machine during a pitch.
- 9.10.3. Pitch Consistency:** If the machine delivers what the **umpire** determines is an errant pitch (too high/low, or outside the strike zone), it is ruled "no pitch," and no penalty is applied.
- 9.10.4. Ball in Play:** A batted ball striking the machine or operator remains **live**, while a thrown ball hitting the machine is **live unless** the umpire deems a dead ball necessary for safety.
- 9.10.5. Adjustment of the Machine:** Adjustments are allowed between innings or for mid-inning inconsistencies, **with umpire approval**.
- 9.10.6. Infield Positioning:** Fielders must stay outside a designated safety zone until the ball is hit. This safety zone will be no less than six (6) feet from the nearest point to the machine.
- 9.10.7. Batter Safety:** If the machine unintentionally delivers unsafe pitches as determined by the umpire (e.g., aimed at the batter), play must stop, and the machine must be adjusted or repaired.
- 9.10.8. Delay of Game:** If a malfunction causes a delay exceeding five (5) minutes, the umpire may switch to manual coach pitch.





# MUDSOCK YOUTH BASEBALL RULES

## 8U League

### 10. TOURNAMENT:

#### 10.1. Seeding

If the number of teams in the league are either eight (8) or sixteen (16) teams, a standard bracket will be utilized that results in highest versus lowest seed game. If the number of teams in the league are anything other than eight (8) or sixteen (16) teams, the regular season top place team(s) will get a bye until the amount of teams remaining can be bracketed for a championship game.

#### 10.2. Seeding Tiebreaker Scenarios:

If there is a tie for a regular season place standing, tie breakers scenarios will be applied in the following order:

- (1) head-to-head game winner.
- (2) run differential.
- (3) fewest total number of runs allowed.
- (4) highest total number of runs scored.
- (5) coin toss

#### 10.3. Adhere to Season Rules:

Regular season rules will apply for the tournament. This includes §5.7 Fair Play/Guaranteed Playing Time.

#### 10.4. Game Tie:

If a game is tied at the end of the time limit or at the conclusion of six (6) innings (whichever comes first), the game can enter extra innings to determine a winner. The seventh inning (and any subsequent innings) will begin with the offensive team having one out. Additionally, the last batted out from the offensive team will be placed on 2<sup>nd</sup> base to begin the inning.

#### 10.5. Championship Game:

The Championship game will not have a time limit. This game will be a full six (6) inning game. If, at the conclusion of six (6) innings, the game is tied, teams should adhere to §10.4. Also, §5.4 still applies.

### 11. ALL STAR GAME:

#### 11.1.

The All-Star team will include a set number of teams and players identified by the league commissioner. The game will adhere to the same set of season rules. The All Star game will not have a time limit. This game will be a full six (6) inning game. If, at the conclusion of six (6) innings, the game is tied, teams should adhere to §10.4. Also, §5.4 still applies.

### 12. FALL BALL RULES:

#### 12.1.

Fall Ball will adhere to rules that are set forth by the commissioner (or designee) at the time of player draft and/or roster creation. Otherwise, Fall Ball Rules will default to this set of rules.