

PLANO BASEBALL ASSOCIATION

LOCAL RULES AND REGULATIONS

Middle School League (7th & 8th Grade)

The [Major League Baseball Official Rules](http://www.usssabaseball.org/) will be the prevailing rule book except where superseded by the USSSA national by-laws or by these PBA local rules. USSSA national rules and by-laws can be found online at <http://www.usssabaseball.org/>.

All PBA regular season and playoff games are governed by these rules.

1. Eligibility:

1.1 All players play as a league age equal to their actual age on April 30th and are eligible for league as defined in the table below. Example: A player that turns 11 years old on April 30th is eligible to play in 11AA. However, if the player turns 11 years old on May 3rd, then he is eligible to play in 10AA.

Age as of April 30th	League Eligibility
12 years old	12AA
13 years old	13AA
14 years old	14AA

1.2 No player may play on two different teams within the same PBA Middle School League. However, players may play in other PBA Leagues. "League" is defined as A, AA, or Early Start "U" within the same league age.

1.3 To be eligible to play in post-season games for a team, a player must have played in 50% or more of that team's regular season games. Eligibility for post-season may be appealed in writing to the League Director, and exceptions for injury or other reasons may be made on an individual case basis.

1.4 A team (including each of its coaches) must be in good financial standing with PBA and its sponsors to be eligible for scheduling.

1.5 If a player is found to be playing illegally for another team, then the player will be ejected from his next legal game, the coach of the offending team will be ejected from his team's next game, and the offending team will forfeit all games in which the illegal player participated.

2. League Rosters:

2.1 Players must be on the official team roster on file at PBA office, and have paid their PBA registration fee in full. No substitute (non-roster) players may play in any game, under any circumstances.

3. League Age Exceptions:

3.1 Any player may advance up one league age level with a signed Parent/Guardian Consent Form on file at the PBA office.

3.2 Players may "play up" one year, and two years only with the PBA President's approval. For example: a league age 10 year old player may play up in the 11 age division but an 9 year old cannot without PBA Presidential approval.

4. Selection of Players:

4.1 Managers have the option to bring an open or closed roster. For open roster teams, PBA can assign players to these teams so that all registered players are placed with a team. For closed roster teams, the team must register and pay for 13 roster spots, and PBA will not assign other registered players to that team.

4.2 PBA reserves the right to add players to any team with an open roster in order to place all players on a team.

5. The Playing Field:

5.1 The dimensions of the field will be as noted in the table below.

Distance between bases	Pitching Distance*	Distance from home plate to the nearest outfield fence will be approximately
80 feet	54 feet	275 feet

* The pitching distance is measured from the front side of the pitchers rubber to the back corner of home plate.

5.2 Players warming up during the game shall do so inside the playing field in outfield foul grounds.

5.3 Home team shall occupy the first base dugout.

5.3a In the post-season tournament (including the league championship game), home team will be the team with the higher seed (higher place in the regular season standings).

5.4 The use of the any part of the infield for pre-game warm-ups is prohibited.

5.5 Players are not allowed to practice hitting regulation baseballs during pre-game warm-ups, except into a net.

6. Equipment:

6.1 Base runners and batters are required to wear helmets.

6.2 All players are required to wear protective cups.

6.3 Catchers:

6.3a Catchers are required to wear full catchers gear.

6.3b Catchers wearing a standard style mask must wear a dangling throat guard. A dangling throat guard is not required when using a hockey style mask.

- 6.3c** Skull caps are NOT permitted.
- 6.3d** Catchers must wear a catcher's mitt.
- 6.4** Metal spikes are permitted.
- 6.5** Players are not allowed to wear jewelry. The umpire may order the jewelry removed or covered to correct the situation (i.e., a religious bracelet must be taped).
- 6.6** Official size baseballs will be used in this league.
- 6.7** Bats cannot exceed 2 ¾ inches in diameter.

7. The Game:

7.1 Definitions:

Regulation Time = 1 hour and 40 minutes running time. Time can be reduced by the umpire for up to ten (10) minutes if the start is delayed waiting for team(s) to field minimum number of players as described in 8.3. Any inning that begins before the End of Regulation time will be completed before teams are required to walk off.

Complete Game = 7 innings or reach the Regulation Time, whichever comes first. A halted game as described in 8.4 shall also be considered complete. A forfeited game shall end with a score of 7 to 0, in favor of the non-forfeiting team.

Exception: League Championship Games will not be time-limited games, they will be played out the full number of innings, subject to the run rule as stated in 7.4.

7.2 No new inning may start after the Regulation Time.

7.2a A new inning is deemed to have started once the last out is recorded in the previous inning.

7.2b At the Regulation Time, the game will continue until the current inning is completed. After the current inning is complete, the game will be halted and considered complete. Teams must exit the field as soon as possible after the completion of the last inning so that the next game may begin as scheduled. If the home team is batting and is ahead at Regulation Time, the game will be halted and they will be declared the winner. If after the last inning is complete, the score is tied, the game will end in a tie.

7.2c In the event that the regulation number of innings is completed and there is still time remaining with the score tied, the game will end in a tie. If this situation occurs during a playoff game, the game will proceed into a Texas Shoot Out tiebreaker as described in Section 12.

7.3 If a coach, manager or player employs, in the judgment of the umpire, any action designed to delay the game for purposes of "running out the game clock", the umpire shall have the authority to suspend the game clock until such delay is concluded. This suspension shall be considered a Judgment Call, and no protest shall be accepted.

7.4 In the event a team has scored more runs than their opponent can score in the remainder of the game, the game will be halted and the final score will be recorded as it stands at that point.

7.5 A tie will count as a half game won and a half game lost.

7.6 Coaches are required to provide lineup cards to the umpire and the opposing coach and/or scorekeeper prior to each game. The lineup card will provide each player's first name, last name, and uniform number. In addition, the lineup card will provide the first and last names for the head and assistant coaches.

7.7 Halted game:

7.7a – A game halted, for any reason, after 5 innings (4 ½ if home team is ahead), will be considered a complete game and will be official (with the exception of forfeits as described in 8.2).

7.8 If a game is suspended for any reason, when it is resumed, it will be resumed from the point of interruption (from the exact game situation and time played) as documented in the official scorebook.

7.9 Coaches participating either on the field or in the dugout are required to present their current season, PBA issued identification badges to the umpires prior to the game start or upon arrival to the game.

7.10 If a coach decides to protest a game, the protest must be declared at the time of the play in question, before the next pitch as stated in Major League Baseball rule 4.19.

8. Game Minimums:

8.1 All teams must have a least eight players to start the game. In this case, the “open” spot in the batting order will be an out each time through the batting order.

8.2 If a team drops below eight players for any reason, the game will be halted and ruled a forfeit.

8.3 A team will have 10 minutes from the scheduled start time to allow the minimum number of players to arrive. This time will reduce the official play time by the number of minutes that it takes for the last players to arrive.

8.4 A game halted, for any reason, according to the number of innings indicated in 7.7, will be considered a complete game and will be official (with the exception of forfeits as described in 8.2).

8.5 If a game is suspended for any reason, when it is resumed, it will be resumed from the point of interruption (from the exact game situation and time played) as documented in the official scorebook.

8.6 No Shows: Any team not showing up for any regularly scheduled game will pay to the league a fee of \$100.00 in order to continue to play in the league. Failure to pay the fine before the next scheduled game will result in a forfeit despite the game's outcome. Any team not showing up a second time will be removed from the league without refund. NO EXCEPTIONS.

8.7 To avoid the no-show fee, a team is required to notify the PBA office one business day in advance of their game.

9. The Hitter:

9.1 A complete batting order (for the purpose of avoiding automatic outs) is one with at least nine players. The batting order shall be composed of all non-injured players present at the game and will proceed continuously through the same order for the duration of the game.

9.2 A batter shall be called out, on appeal by the defensive team, when he fails to bat in his proper turn, and another batter completes a time at bat in his place. The proper batter may take his place in the batter's box at any time before the improper batter becomes a runner or is put out, and any balls and strikes shall be counted in the proper batter's time at bat. Please refer to [MLB Rule 6.07](#) (Batting Out of Turn) for further clarification on this rule.

9.3 A maximum of five runs will be allowed per half inning or three outs, whichever comes first.

9.4 Batting Order

9.4a Players who arrive late for the start of the game shall be added to the team batting order at the end and bat when this position comes up.

9.4b Players who leave before the end of the game may do so. Their position in the batting order will be ignored for the rest of the game and no out will be charged, unless the player's absence reduces the team to less than nine players.

9.4c The batting order position for a player that is ejected will be ignored for the rest of the game and no out will be charged, unless the player's ejection reduces the team to less than nine players.

9.4d In the case of an injury, the team's coach must notify the umpire and official scorer of the injury before the injured player's turn at bat starts. In this case, the player can be skipped in the lineup without incurring an out, subject to the conditions stated in 8.1 and 8.2.

9.5 The batter is responsible for ensuring that he releases his bat in a safe manner after swinging. If, in the umpire's judgment, the batter releases his bat in a reckless or dangerous manner or it makes contact with a player, spectator or umpire, the batter may be warned, called out, and/or ejected, at the discretion of the umpire. In the event that the batter is called out, the ball is dead and no runners may advance or score.

9.6 On deck batters are allowed in this league.

9.7 Batters MAY attempt to advance to first base on a dropped third strike by the catcher.

9.8 No Slashing - On the first offense, if a batter squares to bunt and then swings at the pitch (slashing), with or without runners on base, the batter is out, the runners go back to their bases, and the third-base coach is given a warning. On the second offense, the batter is out, the runners go back to their bases, and the third-base coach is ejected.

9.9 With a runner on 3rd attempting to steal home with the pitch (either on his own or in conjunction with a squeeze bunt), the batter must bunt or take the pitch. If the batter swings instead, the ball will be dead with runners returning to their original bases, the batter will be out, and the 3rd base coach will be EJECTED. NO WARNING will be given in this situation.

10. The Base Runner:

10.1 Lead-offs ARE allowed in this league.

10.2 Base runners may steal at any time unless the umpire has called time.

10.3 Whenever a tag play is evident, runners must slide or seek to avoid contact with the fielder, according to USSSA 2009 rule **8.07.I.12**. Malicious contact shall supersede all obstruction penalties. In this instance the runner shall be declared out and may be ejected at the umpire's discretion. Note: When enforcing this rule, the umpire should judge the runner's intent. If the umpire feels that the contact was unintentional, then the runner should only be declared out. If the umpire feels that the contact was intentional and/or malicious, then the runner should be declared out and ejected.

10.4 Head first slides are allowed.

10.5 If the team's current pitcher or catcher of record reaches base, then a courtesy runner may be used so that the player may prepare for the next inning. The courtesy runner must be the player that made the last out in the batting order.

10.6 Defensive players are required to stay out of the base paths when not involved in making a play on the ball.

10.7 If a base runner leaps over or hurdles a fielder to avoid a tag, unless the fielder is prone on the ground, the runner will be declared out and the ball will be live.

11. Pitching:

11.1 Rules for Pitching Limits

11.1a For the purposes of these pitching rules, if 5 runs are scored in an inning (as stated in Sections 9.3 and 16.1), it shall be equivalent to 3 outs. If multiple pitchers appear in an inning which leads to 5 runs being scored, then the each pitcher shall be charged with a number of outs applying to their pitching limits according to the chart below, regardless of the number of actual outs recorded by the pitcher.

Runs Scored While Pitcher Was Pitching	Outs Charged to Pitching Limit
0 runs	0 outs
1 or 2 runs	1 out
3 or 4 runs	2 outs
5 runs	3 outs

11.1b All pitching limits shall apply per pitcher, not per pitcher per team. In other words, if a player is pitching for two teams, then these pitching limits apply across both teams. The pitcher does not get a new set of innings for each team.

11.1c Pitchers that pitch two (2) consecutive days must rest the third day – regardless of innings pitched and regardless of whether the two consecutive days occurred in the same week.

11.1d A week is considered all games Monday through Sunday.

11.2 Regular season pitching limits

Maximum innings per Game/Day	Maximum Innings per Week*
4 innings (12 outs)	9 innings (27 outs)

11.3 Post season league tournament pitching limits

Maximum innings per Game/Day	Maximum Innings per Week*
4 innings (12 outs)	9 innings (27 outs)

11.4 Penalty

11.4a Any violation of pitching limitations may result in forfeiture of the game. A protest may be declared at any point after an illegal out has been made while the pitcher in violation is in the game and in the pitching position.

11.5 Trips to the mound occurring between innings do count. When a team is charged with its second trip to the mound, in the same inning, to the same pitcher, the pitcher must be removed from the pitching position for the remainder of the game. The pitcher may be moved to another defensive position.

11.6 Balks will be called in this league. Umpires will take into account the age and experience of pitchers, enforcing the balk rule to protect runners from a pitcher's deception.

11.7 Coaches will be required to maintain a pitching log throughout the season. Coaches shall have a current copy of the pitching log at the game and present it for inspection at the request of the game officials and/or League Director. A properly completed scorebook may be considered a pitching log.

11.8 Any pitcher, once removed from the pitching position, cannot return to that position in the same game.

11.9 If a pitcher hits three batters in one inning, the pitcher must be removed from the pitching position for the remainder of the game. The pitcher may be moved to another defensive position.

12. Tournament Tie Breaker Rule:

12.1 In the post-season tournament, once the Regulation Time is reached, the current inning will be played to completion. If the score is tied at this point, then the game will continue according to the Texas Shoot Out Tiebreaker rule as defined below.

12.1a In the league championship game, if a full set of innings have been played and there is a tie, then the game will continue according to the Texas Shoot Out Tiebreaker rule as defined below.

12.2 In Tournament Playoffs, the Texas Shoot Out Tiebreaker rule will be utilized. In that situation, each half inning will start with the bases loaded and one out, with no count on each batter. Each team will continue the batting order from the previous inning, with the three (3) previous batters occupying the bases: the last batter occupying 1st base, the next to last batter occupying 2nd base, and the batter before that occupying 3rd base. The game will continue in this fashion until a winner is determined. All other rules remain the same (i.e., pitching rules, run limit rules, etc.)

13. Defensive Play:

13.1 Free defensive substitutions are allowed at all times.

13.2 Only positive chatter is allowed in this league and is limited to players supporting their own teammates.

13.3 Fair Play Rules

13.3a There is no minimum playing time on defense. However, coaches should plan their lineup and manage the game with the spirit of fair play in mind by keeping all their players regularly involved on defense.

13.4 Obstruction by Fielders: The Major League Baseball definition of "Obstruction" shall apply in this league except that fielders holding runners on base may not block their base by dropping their leg down, parallel to the ground, between the runner and the base while receiving a pickoff throw from the pitcher. This shall be deemed "Obstruction" by the umpire and the runner shall be awarded one base. All other runners forced by this award shall also advance.

14. Field Coaches:

14.1 There will be no coaches allowed on the field during the offensive play other than the two specified base coaches, who are required to remain in foul territory at first and third base.

14.2 Only one defensive coach may position himself outside of his dugout and must remain adjacent to his dugout at all times. No other defensive coaches are allowed on the field.

15. Scorekeeping:

15.1 Each team should have a designated scorekeeper and use a regulation style scorebook. The home team will be the official scorekeeper and, on fields that have electronic scoreboards, the visiting team will provide a scoreboard operator. In the event the home team cannot provide a scorekeeper, the visiting team's scorekeeper will become the official scorekeeper.

16. Run Rules:

16.1 The offensive team is limited to a maximum of five runs per half inning.

16.2 In the event a team has scored more runs than their opponent can score in the remainder of the game, the game will be halted and the final score will be recorded as it stands at that point. With the agreement of the other team, the coach of the team which is behind may elect to play on until a Complete Game has been reached. At that time, both teams must exit the field so that the next game may start on time.

17. League Standings:

17.1 Regular season play will determine the seeding for the End of Season Tournament.

17.1a Seeds will be based on the following:

- Overall Win Percentage
- Head to Head competition
- Average Runs allowed
- Average Runs earned
- Coin toss

18. Sportsmanship:

18.1 Under no circumstances will the use of "foul" or abusive language be tolerated during a PBA sanctioned event (including practices).

18.2 The umpire has the authority before, during, and after the game to eject a coach, player, or spectator if, in his judgment, unsportsmanlike behavior is taking place and the situation warrants such action. Such ejection automatically results in a suspension of the coach, player or spectator according to the length defined below. There will be no appeal or protest of such ejection. The appropriate League Director and League Commissioner will review such incidents to consider if further disciplinary actions are needed. In this case a [DRP](#) will be convened to consider such action.

18.2a Length of Suspensions

- First ejection: Next game
- Second ejection within a single season: Next 3 games
- Third ejection within a single season: Remainder of season plus Disbarment from PBA

18.2b Suspensions carry over to or from regular season games to PBA-hosted tournaments, playoffs, or championship games.

18.2c Coach comments or complaints about officials should be directed to: PBA Director of Umpiring, through your League Director.

18.2d The League Director will notify a coach or player suspended as a result of an ejection under this rule of additional game suspensions. However, coaches suspended under the provisions of 18.2a, above, are responsible for enforcing the appropriate suspension on themselves, assistant coaches or players ejected, whether a notice from the League Director is received or not. A player or coach who appears at or participates in a game for which he has been suspended under this rule shall be treated as having a Third Ejection within a single season and the team shall forfeit the game.

18.3 A team's head coach of record, or senior coach at a game, is responsible for the actions of the team's players, parents, and spectators.

18.4 A team's head coach may request, in writing, that an opposing team's coach, player, parent or spectator be suspended by PBA for unsportsmanlike behavior. Such requests will be presented to the appropriate League Director and forwarded with recommendation to the League Commissioner. If warranted, the Commissioner may convene a DRP to consider such request.

18.5 To discourage conflicts over rulings/judgments by a game official, the following rules are intended to allow coaches to discuss rulings with the umpires in a designated "conference" and in a courteous manner. Coaches are forbidden to enter the field of play to dispute any official ruling without asking for and receiving permission to do so from an umpire. Failure to comply is grounds for automatic and immediate ejection from the game. If a coach has a question on an umpire's interpretation of a rule, the coach is allowed to request a conference with the umpire at the foul line to clarify any disputes. If, in the umpire's judgment, an error has been made, the umpire can alter the previous ruling. However, only errors in the interpretation of rules may be changed, not judgment calls.

18.6 If a coach, player, or spectator is ejected he or she must leave the area of the field immediately. If he or she does not comply without delay, the umpire may suspend the game and issue a verbal warning to the remaining coaches on the team. If, in the umpire's judgment, the offending coach, player, or spectator has not complied, the umpire will stop play and the game will be ruled a forfeit against that team. In the event that the umpire declares a forfeit under this provision, the pending applicable suspension against the offending party, under rule 18.2a above, shall be increased by an additional game.

18.7 If a coach detects conflicting calls between umpires on a specific play, the coach may request that the umpires confer to determine the correct final call. No coach may intervene during the umpire's conference.

18.8 Any complaint about a game official or a coach's behavior should be made in writing to the appropriate League Director.

18.9 The Commissioner and League Director's rulings are final.

19. Acts of Disbarment Include:

Disbarment is the suspension from all PBA activities (including practices) for at least the remainder of the current season. A disbarred person can only be reinstated upon that person's application to and subsequent approval of the PBA Board of Directors. A DRP will be convened to hear the allegation and determine the penalty. Disbarment will be the penalty for any of the offenses described below.

19.1 Physical attack on an umpire, league official, coach or fan during a game or immediately following a game, played under the administration of PBA.

19.2 Player, coaches, manager or sponsor threatening an umpire, league official, coach or fan.

19.3 Any officer, director, umpire, player, coach, manager or sponsor fighting, using unsportsmanlike conduct or abusive tactics or derogatory or unbecoming acts that is detrimental and not in the best interests of PBA.

19.4 Destruction of property or abuse of property of PBA or the City of Plano.

19.5 Fans, spectators and players are prohibited from shouting harassing, disparaging remarks or profanity to opposing players or coaches on the field. Umpires are instructed to call time, and eject the fan or spectator.

19.6 Three ejections during a single season.

20. All Leagues:

20.1 The Commissioner and League Directors have the authority to interpret and to submit suggested rules changes to the Rules Committee but not to change rules without approval. Changes by the Rules Committee can be made and communicated at any time to ensure the league can benefit from any approved suggestions.