

2025

LEAGUE

HANDBOOK



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COMMISSIONER'S MESSAGE

Mt. Airy Baseball is a great organization. It has been providing play and instruction to players between the ages of 5 and 18 for thirty-nine years. In that time, the league has grown from twenty players on two teams to more than 700 players in five age divisions, playing on 58 teams.

Volunteers make all of this possible. They are coaches, assistant coaches, concession workers, groundskeepers, board members and more. We are a cooperative effort by neighbors for neighbors.

All of us are particularly grateful for the contributions of our coaches. They give generously of their time to make the season a growth filled and exciting experience for our kids. The practices, the games, the playoffs, and the memories would not be possible without your efforts.

We created this handbook to further the primary goal of our organization: instruction. The competition is fun, but our main purpose is to teach kids to play the game properly, try their hardest and show good sportsmanship regardless of the score.

We hope that our outline of skill expectations, collection of advice and rules will help your work with the young baseball players of Mt. Airy towards our common goals.

Thank you again for all your efforts.

See you on the field.

Dan Winterstein

League Commissioner

MISSION STATEMENT

Mt. Airy is a diverse neighborhood with a proud tradition of vibrant religious, political, business, and social organizations. Mt. Airy Baseball is a volunteer group within this community tradition, providing a safe and instructional environment for youth baseball games and practice. Every season we organize age and skill-based baseball leagues open to all children in the area.

We strive to encourage in the young players of Mt Airy:

- Honest play cooperation, sportsmanship, and commitment to team effort.
- Coordination, stamina, strength, and alertness necessary for athletic achievement
- Competitive spirit that is passionate, but fair, striving for both individual and group accomplishment
- Trust and respect for adults who provide instruction and guidance
- Love of baseball and familiarity with its history and proper play

In addition, our activities reinforce the basic trust and understanding among adults in Mt. Airy. No differences due to race, class, gender, sexual orientation, or religious belief should bar full participation in our league by any child or adult resident.

COACHING GOALS

1. Induce the best attitude in each player. Teach the importance of hard work and the will to improve.
2. Teach that players must come to practice to learn to play baseball and that every player will be taught to play.
3. Teach that physical errors can be expected, but mental errors will not be excused. Never criticize a player for a physical mistake. Physical errors (striking out, dropped balls, overthrows, walks) are a part of the game and no big deal. Find positive ways to teach proper technique in practice. On the other hand, there's no excuse for not hustling, paying attention, backing up, supporting and encouraging your teammates.
4. Organize practices so that the time can be spent wisely. Set up all drills with prior planning.
5. Keep it fun. Learning to play baseball should be fun. Make drills into games, praise accomplishments, enjoy each other.
6. Get all players working in practices. Utilize drills to keep all players learning. Drills should include all players whenever possible.
7. Teach the importance of stretching and warming up before throwing to avoid injury.
8. Stress fundamentals. Get the players performing the fundamental plays correctly before going beyond them.
9. Try to be clear and precise when explaining a drill, check to see if the players understand. While, you know what you want, it's more important that they know what you want.
10. Teach situational play and proper situational thinking.
11. Most of the practice time should be spent drilling offensive and defensive situations. Situational play is doing what the situation calls for. Teach players

situations that include throwing to the correct base, cutoffs, situations in which they are most likely to bunt, steal, tag up, etc.

12. Perform drills that make players think, concentrate, and communicate. Make sure that the drills are done correctly several times, not just once. Always encourage action and thinking in games and practices.
13. Pitchers must get special attention. They should work on proper motion and delivery and should throw to a catcher.
14. Teach pitchers to throw strikes, to concentrate first on control, not velocity.
15. Teach proper hitting and bunting technique. Proper situations to bunt must be explained and emphasized.
16. Teach the importance of pre-game infield and outfield before each game. The team should have a lively, alert, sharp pre-game.
17. Once the game starts, let the kids enjoy the game. During a game. is not the time to teach hitting or pitching techniques.
18. Insist that players never give up. Expect that every player will react to every situation to the best of their ability regardless of the score.

FIRST AID

Below are some basic first aid instructions. Remember, think safety first.

Sprains and strains:

Best treatment is ice and rest. If pain increases or increased swelling, see a doctor.

Bruises: Apply ice

Eye injuries:

Foreign body (i.e. dirt): Advise child not to rub. If not washed out on its own, pull lid down and remove w/gauze pad. Remind child to not put fingers in eyes. Remind to see MD if it continues to bother him/her.

Hit in eye:

Ice immediately. If complains of visual changes or pain, see MD immediately. Fortunately, the bones of the eye socket will usually protect the eyeball.

Head injury:

Remember, safety first: Always (in practice and in games) wear helmets at bat and when running the bases! If hit in the head, apply ice immediately. If there is any change in mental status, (i.e. disoriented, loss of consciousness, inability to walk) see a doctor at once.

Open wounds:

Always wear gloves, if bleeding present, to protect yourself. Small wound: clean and apply Band-Aid or gauze dressing. Large wound, stop bleeding w/pressure (use sterile gauze pad), clean and dress. If unable to control bleeding, elevate, apply pressure, and see MD. (Unlikely to happen in this setting.)

Fractures:

Immobilize and apply ice. Do not try to straighten! Compound fractures (fractures with open wounds): Cover wound w/sterile gauze, immobilize, and see MD.

Hit in chest with ball:

Check heart rate and breathing immediately. If child is alert, pulse rate regular and breathing without problem, apply ice. If any change or irregularity of pulse, call ambulance. If no pulse or not breathing, start CPR and call ambulance immediately.

Choking:

If a child (or adult) is choking, they will be unable to speak. To do the Heimlich maneuver, put one hand in a fist and place just below the victim's sternum (breastbone) and with the other hand, give the fisted hand a thrust inward and upward. In a child, especially, this does not have to be a strong thrust. Usually this action is enough to loosen whatever is lodged in the throat.

Seizures:

Lay victim on side and protect head. Do not place anything in the mouth and do not in any way immobilize the victim. Just protect his head from banging into anything. If no history of previous seizures, especially if caused by trauma, call an ambulance.

T-BALL (AGES 5-6)

ESSENTIAL SKILLS

T-Ball is an introduction to baseball. Players begin to learn the basic skills of the game. Instruction should be kept simple. Competency or proficiency in a particular skill is not important at this level. It is important that the children learn some fundamental mechanics, practice good sportsmanship, and have fun.

Throwing

- Turn to the side, back of front shoulder facing the target
- Throwing arm in L position
- Grips ball on top
- Strides towards the throw

Hitting

Stance

- Feet balanced; knees bent
- Top hand over, hands together
- Rear elbow relaxed

Stride

- Front foot makes soft, short, straight step

Swing

- Head stays on ball through swing
- Swings down and through the ball
- Hits ball off the tee
- Swings at pitched ball (underhand)

Fielding: Infield

- Balanced Starting Position
- Knees bent
- “Clam hands” “Feed the Alligator” Catches, fields with two hands
- Slides right/left to keep glove and ball between the shoulders

T-BALL DIVISION

- Keeps rear end down when fielding the ball (mouse butt)

Fielding: Outfield

- In ready position, knees bent, eye on the batter
- “Clam Hands” Catches with two hands

Baserunning

- In ready position, one foot out, ready to run
- Runs when ball is hit

Personal

- Encourages teammates
- Listens to coaches
- Pays attention in the field
- Runs to defensive position
- Runs off the field
- Stays on the bench when team is at bat

RULES

General Information

T-Ball is an introduction to baseball. Players begin to learn the basic skills of the game. Instruction should be kept simple. Competency or proficiency in a particular skill is not important at this level. It is important that the children learn some fundamental mechanics, practice good sportsmanship, and have fun. No scores of games or won-loss records are kept.

T-Ball League Rules

1. Everyone plays. All players play every inning in the field. Coaches should limit the number of players in the infield to the traditional infield positions to avoid collisions and help players learn the infield positions. Coaches are encouraged to rotate players between the infield and outfield each inning and each game.
2. Bat the roster. All players bat in order prior to the lead-off hitter hitting a second time. Players bat in order until all players have batted once. If a player comes after the game begins, that player is added to the bottom of the batting order. All players will bat each inning regardless of the number of outs made.
3. There are no umpires. If there is any doubt, allow the runner to remain on base.
4. A coach will place the T-ball on the batting T. Coaches are encouraged to instruct and assist players to help them to hit the ball. Coaches have the option of pitching underhand to players who have demonstrated that they are able to hit the ball off the T and would like a pitched ball. Coaches are encouraged to use the T for all players the first 4 games of the season.
5. There will be no walks or strikes. A batter will remain at bat until the ball is put in play. Coaches may provide hands-on assistance to players who cannot make contact with the ball after receiving instruction and making several tries.

T-BALL DIVISION

6. No stealing, no leads. Runners may not advance until the batter contacts the ball.
7. No forfeits. If one team has an insufficient number of players to field nine, said team may use a substitute(s) from the opponent's roster.
8. Length of game is when both teams have had the same number of opportunities to bat within the allotted time.
9. Running the bases on a hit ball
 - a. Players may advance **until the fielding team returns the ball to a bucket in the center of the field.**
 - b. **If a player is more than halfway to a base when the ball goes in the bucket, the player is awarded the next base.** Otherwise, the player should return to the last base touched.
10. Players may not throw the bat under any circumstances.
11. Players may not run into each other on the bases. On a play at a base, a player must stop to avoid a collision. Sliding is not permitted.
12. Protective equipment rules:
 - a. The T-ball is soft. Players need not wear protective equipment.
13. The League holds its coaches, players, and spectators to the highest standards of conduct and sportsmanship. If a coach or spectator is unwilling to meet these standards, the incident should be reported to the T-Ball League Commissioner who will determine if further disciplinary action is warranted up to and including removal from the League.

T-BALL DIVISION

AA (AGES 7 & 8)

ESSENTIAL SKILLS

AA works on the development of fundamental baseball skills. The focus is on developing good mechanics, work habits and baseball knowledge. The AA level also begins to introduce a few aspects of team play. However, most of the emphasis is on learning basic individual skills. Competency or proficiency in a particular skill, while desirable, is less important at this level than learning and practicing the fundamental mechanics, good sportsmanship and having fun.

Throwing

- Turn to the side, back of front shoulder facing the target
- Throwing arm in L position
- Grips ball on top
- Strides towards the throw
- Good follow-through, completes arm rotation

Hitting

Stance

- Feet balanced; knees bent
- Even weight distribution
- Top hand over, hands together
- “Five eyes” on the pitching machine
- Rear elbow relaxed
- Hands in, back and up (even with front shoulder)
- Bat in proper position: (1:00 right handers, 11:00 left handers)

Stride

- Front foot closed
- Front foot makes soft, short step
- Weight balanced in center of body

Swing

- Head stays still through swing
- Swings down and through the ball
- Pivots on back foot, shoelaces towards the pitcher
- Good follow through
- Swings at pitched ball
- Gets bat on ball (any contact)

Fielding: Infield

- Balanced Starting Position
- Knees bent
- Weight on balls of feet
- Glove open to the ball
- Hands out
- Slides right/left to keep ball glove and ball between the shoulders
- Fields ball in front, with glove out
- Keeps rear end down when fielding the ball (mouse butt)
- Catches with two hands (clam hands)
- Calls for fly balls
- Positions for cutoff throw
- SS and 2nd cover second appropriately (ball hit to left or right side)

Fielding: Outfield

- In ready position, knees bent, eyes on the batter
- Calls for fly balls
- Catches with two hands
- Catches above the shoulders
- Moves to ball right/left, before the ball is in the outfield
- Throws to correct base
- Throws to cut-off

Baserunning

- Runs through first base on ball hit in the infield

- Turns towards second on ball hit in the outfield
- Watches coach on bases
- In ready position when on base, one foot out, ready to run
- Quick start from base when ball crosses the plate
- Runs to next base on ground balls
- Goes halfway or tags on fly balls as instructed by coach

Personal

- Encourages teammates
- Listens to coaches
- Pays attention in the field
- Hustles
- Shows leadership

RULES

General information

AA works on the development of fundamental baseball skills. The focus is on developing good mechanics, work habits and baseball knowledge. The AA level also begins to introduce a few aspects of team play. However, most of the emphasis is on learning basic individual skills. Competency or proficiency in a particular skill, while desirable, is less important at this level than learning and practicing the fundamental mechanics, good sportsmanship and having fun.

AA League Rules

1. Use regular baseball rules except as modified herein:
2. Everyone plays. Unlimited substitutions are permitted. All players must play at least two innings (six defensive outs) in the field by the fourth inning.
 - a. At the end of the fourth inning, the scorekeepers must record in the scorebook and, upon request, report to the opposing team all substitutions.
 - b. If a player leaves the game due to injury or illness, that player will not be required to meet the participation rule.
 - c. Failure to comply with the participation rule will result in the game being forfeited.
3. Bat the roster: All players bat in order prior to the lead-off hitter hitting a second time, regardless of whether a player plays in the field. Players bat in order until 3 outs are made, or the 6-run rule is invoked. If a player comes after the game begins, that player is added to the bottom of the batting order. Players must arrive prior to the start of the third inning to be eligible to play.
4. Batting out of turn: A batter who bats out of turn can be replaced by the proper batter any time during the at bat once an improper batter is brought to the umpire's attention. The proper batter will then inherit the count. No penalty is incurred.

5. 6 run rule will apply. No team can score more than 6 runs in a half inning under any circumstances. When the 6th run scores, the inning is concluded regardless of outs and the next half-inning begins.
 - a. **Mercy Rule: If a team is leading by more than 6 runs at the end of the fifth inning, or more than 12 runs at the end of the fourth inning, the umpire shall end the game.**
 - b. **When team has a 10-run lead, they must play station to station baseball as a gesture of good sportsmanship until the lead is 9 runs or less. A team violating this rule will receive a warning and the player must return to the base.**
6. Players must play the traditional infield and outfield positions. Coaches may use a fourth outfielder for a total of ten players in the field. **Coaches are encouraged to teach catchers to squat and catch the ball from the pitching machine.**
7. The pitching machine operated and adjusted by the coach or assistant coach of the offensive team will deliver pitches.
8. If the league does not assign an umpire, the coach feeding the pitching machine will act as the “umpire in charge” and will exercise all decisions relative to all rule interpretations. In addition, said coach will make all judgment calls on fly balls and keep count of the number of pitches and strikes on the batter. The umpire in charge will determine if the batter did swing and observe for runners leaving the base too soon.
 - a. The “umpire in charge” may select adults to coach the bases and assist. This assistance is limited to determining if a batted ball is fair or foul and advising on safe/out calls at first and third base, if called upon. In all cases, the “umpire in charge” must make the call.
9. The defensive team may place one coach in the outfield **to provide instruction** during the game. The outfield coach should keep instructions simple and not interfere with the game in progress.

10. There will be no walks or called strikes. A batter will receive a maximum of six pitches.
 - a. Whenever a batter has five pitches and hits a foul ball, the batter will receive additional pitches until the batter puts the ball in play or strikes out. A batter strikes out by swinging at and missing three pitches or by failing to swing at the sixth or final pitch.
 - b. If the pitching machine malfunctions and, in the sole discretion of the umpire, throws a clearly unhittable pitch, the umpire may declare a non-pitch.
11. No stealing, no leads. Runners may not advance until the ball crosses the plate. If a runner is observed by the umpire in charge to leave base before the ball crosses the plate, the runner must return to base and the batter to the batters box.
 - a. If a runner is observed to leave the base before the ball crosses the plate, the umpire in charge will warn the runner. Leaving early a second time in an inning will result in the runner being called out.
12. If a batted ball hits the pitching machine or the adult feeding the machine prior to being touched by a defensive player, the ball is alive and play continues, unless the ball remains under the machine. If the ball remains under the machine the umpire will call the play dead and the batter will receive another pitch.
13. If a ball thrown by a defensive player hits the machine, it is a live ball and play continues, unless the ball remains under the machine. If the ball remains under the machine the umpire will call the play dead.
14. Forfeits for too few players. If a team is not able to field eight players ***in uniform*** within 15 minutes of the scheduled start time, the game will be recorded as a forfeit. If a forfeit is recorded, the game should still be played using a substitute(s) from the opponent's roster.
15. When fielding 8 players, the ninth position in the batting order shall be recorded as an out.

16. Length of game is 6 innings or two hours, whichever comes first. No inning can be started after 1 ½ hours of play have elapsed. No minimum number of innings is required for an official game. The umpire shall have sole discretion in determining time elapsed and the start of a new inning.

17. Control by the pitcher, runners cannot advance

- a. Once the pitcher controls the ball on the mound, runners may not advance. The player need not hold the ball up. The umpire will discuss with coaches before the game how the “mound” is defined for purposes of this rule.
- b. If in the judgment of the umpire in charge, the runner was more than half-way to the base when the pitcher gained control of the ball, the runner will be awarded the next base. Otherwise, the player will return to the last base touched. The umpire in charge will make all decisions relative to awarding bases in said situation. On the blue field, the umpire will ignore the extended infield dirt and judge the line between the infield and the outfield as if it were the gold field.

18. **Batted balls must be thrown by the outfielder to an infielder. If an outfielder runs the ball to an infielder. The umpire will call the play dead and award all base runners an additional base.**

19. Throws that leave the field of play (enter a dead ball area)

- a. When, in an attempt to throw a batter out at first base, a batted ball is thrown from the infield and leaves the field of play beyond first base, the ball is dead and runners shall not be awarded an additional base (beyond that which the player would be entitled under Rule 17.b regarding the end of a play). In all other cases when a thrown ball leaves the field of play, players shall be awarded one additional base. The umpire in charge will make all decisions relative to throws into dead ball areas.
- b. When an overthrow remains in play (does not enter a dead ball area), the ball is alive and runners may advance at their own risk.

20. Live and dead ball rule

- a. Once an inning starts, the ball is alive and remains alive until a rule described herein (e.g. ball controlled by an infielder) or the umpire in charge calls time at which time the ball is dead.
- b. When the ball is dead, no player may be put out, no bases may be run and no runs may be scored, except from acts that occurred while the ball was alive (such as an overthrow or a home run)

21. Players may not throw the bat under any circumstances. If player throws the bat, the umpire in charge will issue a team warning. If any player on the team throws the bat a second time, the player will be called out. If the batter is called out for throwing the bat, the ball is dead, and all runners shall return to their original bases.

22. Players may not run into each other on the bases. **When there is an imminent play at a base**, a player must slide or stop (surrender) to avoid a collision. When there is an imminent play at a base, a player who does not slide or stop will be called out.

23. No headfirst sliding **into** a base is permitted. If a player slides head first into a base, the player will be called out. Players may slide headfirst **back** to a base they have obtained.

24. The game can begin unless instructed otherwise by a League Commissioner. The League Commissioner will inform coaches at least one hour before game time if the field is clearly not playable.

25. Equipment rules

- a. The league will provide each team with 5 batting helmets for use while batting and running the bases. Batters and all runners must always wear helmets. A runner who intentionally removes a helmet while the ball is live without the umpire's permission may be called out.
- b. Catchers must wear a catcher's helmet, mask, chest protector and shin guards. Catchers must wear a cup.

- c. Metal or composite bats must bear the **USA Baseball label**.
Softball bats are **not** permitted. USSSA Bats are **not** permitted.
Wood bats **are** permitted. This is the USA Baseball label:



26. Marking the lines, bringing out the equipment and dugout positioning.

- a. It is the responsibility of both teams to mark the foul lines and batter's box with chalk, place the bases in their proper position, set up the pitching machine and bring out the batting helmets and pitching machine balls before the scheduled start-time.
- b. Each coach should come to the park knowing which is the home team. **The home team shall take the first-base dugout, and the visitors, the third-base dugout.**

27. **All players**, when not on the field, belong in the dugout, preferably on the bench. Only the next hitter may be between the dugout and the plate.

- a. **Players on deck and waiting to bat may not under any circumstances swing a bat before they go onto the field.**

28. Responsibilities for coaches, players and spectators

- a. The coach is responsible for moving the players on and off the field as quickly as possible, including having the catcher dressed and ready. Coaches, to the extent possible, should prepare line-ups, field assignments and substitutions in advance.

- b. Each player shall be in full uniform, including hat on head, shirt tucked into pants all the way around, and shoes well tied. The coach should make sure that each player is properly dressed before taking the field or coming up to bat. If a player wears batting gloves, these should be properly on the hands before the player comes up to bat.
- c. If a player throws or abuses equipment in any manner, the umpire will warn the team and the coach. If any player throws or abuses equipment again, the player will be ejected from the game.
- d. If a player or coach verbally abuses an umpire, the individual may be ejected from the game without warning and directed to leave the park immediately. The umpire has the discretion to issue one warning for disrespectful behavior. If the behavior does not stop immediately or reoccurs at any time, the coach or player will be ejected from the game and asked to leave the park.
- e. If a spectator verbally abuses an umpire, the umpire will ask the coaches to join him in warning the individual(s) that if the abuse continues, he/she will be asked to leave the park. In extreme cases, where such behavior continues, the umpire will direct that the game be stopped.

29. Standards of Conduct.

- a. The League holds its coaches and players to the highest standards of conduct and sportsmanship. If a coach or player demonstrates an unwillingness to meet those standards, the incident should be reported to the League Commissioner who will determine if further disciplinary action is warranted up to and including removal from the League.
- b. Coaches, players and spectators are expected to conduct themselves with the highest level of sportsmanship at all Mt. Airy Baseball events. Improper behavior includes, but is not limited to,

verbal, physical and non-verbal taunting of any player, coach or umpire. It also includes the use of noisemakers, musical instruments, bells, whistles, horns, or any amplified sound.

- c. There is to be no harassment of any kind directed to a pitcher, batter, or fielder, from the player's team or bench.
- d. The head coach is responsible for compliance by spectators, players, and any assistant coaches. Compliance is solely in the judgment of the umpire. Non-compliance will result in an umpire-issued warning to the coach. Coaches will be instructed to remind spectators, players and coaches of the rule and the consequences for non-compliance.
- e. If the behavior continues a second non-compliance will result in the ejection of the head coach. If an assistant coach is not available, the game will be forfeited. A third incident of non-compliance will also result in the game being forfeited.

AAA (AGES 9 & 10)

ESSENTIAL SKILLS

AAA players continue to work on the development of fundamental baseball skills learned in AA. The primary focus is on developing good mechanics, work habits and baseball knowledge. New skills and additional aspects of team play are introduced. Competency or proficiency in catching the ball and throwing accurately are stressed. Hitters are now expected to swing at pitched balls. While most children will put the ball in play, for some the players, making contact with a pitched ball is an important accomplishment. Pitching skills are introduced for the first time at this level. Coaches should emphasize good mechanics and accuracy. Velocity, while desirable, is not required in AAA. With the introduction of pitching and advanced skills, games become somewhat more competitive. However, the primary focus should remain learning and practicing the fundamental mechanics, good sportsmanship and having fun.

Throwing

- Turn to the side, Back of front shoulder facing the target
- Breaks hands throwing arm extended (windmill motion),
- Elbow above the shoulder
- Hand on top of the ball
- Strides towards the throw
- Good follow-through, completes arm rotation
- Throws accurately (in middle of chest) from 60 feet (4 of 5 throws)

Hitting:

Stance

- Feet balanced, knees bent
- Even weight distribution
- “Five eyes” on the pitcher
- Top hand over bottom hand
- Hands together
- Rear elbow relaxed
- Hands in, back and up (even with front shoulder)
- Bat in proper position: (1:00 right handers, 11:00 left handers)

- Squares to bunt in proper position

Stride

- Front foot closed
- Front foot makes soft, short step forward
- Weight balanced over center of body

Swing

- Head stays still, on ball through swing
- Swings down and through the ball
- Pivots on back foot, shoe laces towards the pitcher
- Good follow through, does not stop arm during swing

Fielding: Infield

- Balanced Starting Position
- Knees bent, Rear end down to start
- Weight on balls of feet
- Glove open to the ball
- Hands out
- Slides right/left to keep ball glove and ball between the shoulders
- Fields ball in front
- Keeps rear end down when fielding the ball
- Fields backhanded and forehanded
- Calls for fly balls
- Positions for cutoff throw
- SS and 2nd cover second appropriately (ball hit to left or right side)
- Backs up team-mates
- Catches thrown ball with two hands
- Catches batted ball with two hands

Fielding: Outfield

- In ready position, knees bent, eye on the batter
- Turns and runs to ball right/left, before the ball is in the outfield

- Calls for fly balls
- Catches with two hands
- Catches above the shoulders
- Crow hops
- Throws to correct base
- Throws to cut-off
- Backs up team-mates

Baserunning

- Runs through first base on ball hit in the infield
- Turns towards second on ball hit in the outfield
- Watches coach on bases
- In ready position when on base, one foot out, ready to run
- Quick start from base when ball crosses the plate
- Runs to next base on ground balls
- Goes halfway or tags on fly balls as instructed by coach
- Slides feet first on close plays

Pitching (Stretch Position)

- Balanced starting position, weight in center of the body
- Grips ball on top and behind
- Breaks hands, arm extended
- Elbow above the shoulder
- Remains balanced, maintains balance point
- Eyes remain on target
- Good follow-through, completes arm rotation
- Front foot lands on ball of foot
- Good Fielding position
- Throws strikes 60% of time

Personal

- Encourages teammates

- Listens to coaches
- Pays attention in the field
- Runs to defensive position
- Runs off the field
- Helps coach put equipment away
- Stays on bench when team is at bat
- Shows leadership

RULES

General Information

AAA players continue to work on the development of fundamental baseball skills learned in AA. The primary focus is on developing good mechanics, work habits and baseball knowledge. New skills and additional aspects of team play are introduced. Competency or proficiency in catching the ball and throwing accurately are stressed. Hitters are now expected to swing at pitched balls. While most children will put the ball in play, for some the players, making contact with a pitched ball is an important accomplishment. Pitching skills are introduced for the first time at this level. Coaches should emphasize good mechanics and accuracy. Velocity, while desirable, is not required in AAA. With the introduction of pitching and advanced skills, games become somewhat more competitive. However, the primary focus should remain learning and practicing the fundamental mechanics, good sportsmanship and having fun.

AAA League Rules

1. Use regular baseball rules except as modified herein.
2. Everyone plays. Unlimited substitutions are permitted. All players must play at least two innings (six defensive outs) in the field by the fourth inning.
 - a. Scorekeepers must record in the scorebook and, upon request, report to the opposing team all substitutions.
 - b. If a player leaves the game due to injury or illness, that players will not be required to meet the participation rule.
 - c. Failure to comply with the participation rule will result in the game being forfeited.
3. Unlimited Substitutions, except pitcher. A player, once substituted for at a position in the field, may reenter the game at any time, in any position on the field, except pitcher. A pitcher may not reenter the game as a pitcher. (See: VI. Rules Regarding the Pitcher)

4. Bat the roster. All players bat in order prior to the lead-off batter batting for a second time regardless of whether a player plays in the field. Players bat in order until 3 outs are made or the 6 run rule is invoked. If a player comes after the game begins, that player is added to the bottom of the batting order. Players must arrive before the beginning of the third inning to be eligible to play and meet the participation rule.
5. Nine players must play the traditional infield and outfield positions.
6. 6 run rule: No team shall be allowed to score more than six runs in a half-inning under any circumstances. When the 6th run is scored, the half-inning is concluded regardless of outs and a new half inning begins.
7. Mercy Rule: if a team is leading by more than 6 runs at the end of the fifth inning, or more than 12 runs at the end of the fourth inning, the umpire shall end the game.
 - a. ***When team has a 10 run lead, they must play station to station baseball as a gesture of good sportsmanship until the lead is 9 runs or less. A team violating this rule will receive a warning for the first violation with the player returning to the base. A runner violating this rule after the team has received a warning will be called out.***
8. Forfeits for too few players. If a team is not able to field eight players in uniform within 15 minutes of the scheduled start time, the game will be recorded as a forfeit, unless, in the judgment of the umpire, a delay is unavoidable. The game should then be played using a substitute(s) from the opponent's roster. The umpire shall be the sole judge of recording a forfeit.
 - a. If at any time during the game, a team is unable to field 8 players, the game shall be recorded as a forfeit.
 - b. For the sole purpose of avoiding a forfeit, teams may field up to two non-rostered players from a younger division. A called-up player must bat at the end of the batting order, may not pitch, and may not play more innings in the field than any rostered player in attendance.

9. When fielding eight players, the ninth position in the batting order shall be recorded as an out.
10. Length of game is 6 innings or two hours, whichever comes first. No inning can be started after 1 3/4 hours of play have elapsed. The umpire shall be the sole judge of the time elapsed.
11. Official and called games
 - a. A game must go four innings to be official, 3 1/2 innings if the home team is leading going into the bottom of the fourth. If a game is called before it becomes an official game due to time, weather or darkness, it will be resumed from where it left off. Called games may be rescheduled with the AAA Commissioner.
 - b. An official game that is tied after six innings or when time runs out, shall be recorded as a tie.
12. Assignment of players, adding players
 - a. Players may only be added to a team by the AAA Commissioner.
 - b. Violation of the above rule should be reported to the AAA League Commissioner who will decide if any further action is warranted up to and including forfeiture of the game.
13. Practices will be scheduled by the coach. Players are expected to attend and participate in practices. If a player repeatedly misses practices, the player and his/her parent will receive a warning from the coach that the player may have to sit out a game, if attendance at practice does not improve.
 - a. Every child will miss practice on occasion. The sanction of sitting out a game is reserved for those players, who continually do not come to scheduled practices. If a child is to sit out a game, the coach will discuss the situation with the League Commissioner.

Responsibility of the Umpire

14. Authority, Appeals

- a. The umpire has the authority to enforce all League rules and is responsible for the conduct of the game. Each umpire also has authority to rule on any point not specifically covered in these rules. Any umpire's decision, which involves judgment such as fair or foul, safe or out, is final. No coach or player can object to any such decision.
- b. If there is reasonable doubt that an umpire's decision conflicts with the rules, a coach may appeal to the umpire who made the decision and request that the umpire consult the rulebook or League officials, if available, for further information, before making a final decision. The coach shall not go over the umpire's head directly to League officials. All appeals must be made in a respectful manner. (See Responsibility of Coaches, section VII,2)
- c. If, after reviewing the rule, a coach continues to believe the umpire's decision conflicts with the rules, a coach may notify the umpire the game is being played under protest. The umpire will record the protest in the official scorebook (the home team's book, if there is no official scorekeeper) and report the protest to the Major League Commissioner for review, immediately after the game. ***Such protests should be rare and must never result in a delay of the game.***
- d. If the League does not supply an official scorekeeper, the home team's book, shall be considered the official scorebook and signed by the umpire at the conclusion of the game to indicate that both teams agree with the outcome.

15. Deciding fitness of the field

- a. The umpire will start the game unless instructed otherwise by a League Commissioner. The League Commissioner will inform coaches at least one hour before game time if the field is clearly not playable.

16. Starting the game: The umpire shall proceed to home plate to be met by the coaches of the opposing teams. The home team and visiting team shall give their batting order to the opposing team prior to meeting at home plate. When the umpire has determined that batting orders have been exchanged, the umpire is in charge of the playing field. The umpire will explain any ground rules to the coaches, direct the defensive team to take the field and call Play Ball to start the game.
17. The umpire should take whatever position on the field that allows the best view of the play.

Rules regarding the batter

18. Throwing the bat. Players may not throw the bat under any circumstances. If player throws the bat, the umpire will issue one team warning to the player and the head coach. If any player on the team throws a bat again during the game, the player will be called out. If the batter is called out for throwing the bat, the ball is dead, and all runners shall return to their original bases.
19. Batting out of turn. A batter who bats out of turn can be replaced by the proper batter any time during the at bat once an improper batter is brought to the umpire's attention. The proper batter will then inherit the count. No penalty is incurred.
20. Hit by a pitched ball
- a. When a pitched ball outside the strike zone touches a batter, it is a dead ball, and the batter is awarded first base. No runners may advance.
 - b. If a pitched ball in the strike zone touches the batter, it shall be called a strike. It is a dead ball, and no base is awarded and no runners may advance.
 - c. If a batter swings at a pitch and is touched by the pitch, it shall be called a strike. It is a dead ball, and no base is awarded and no runners may advance.

21. Foul tip: If a catcher holds a foul tip on the third strike, the batter is out. ***The ball is alive, and the runners may advance at their own risk.***
22. Infield fly rule. The infield fly rule is **not** used at this level.
23. Dropped third strike rule. No dropped third strike rule is used. If the catcher drops or misses a third strike, the batter is out. Runners may advance at their own risk.
24. Intentional Walk. No intentional walks are permitted at this level.
25. Equipment rules.
- a. The league will provide each team with 5 batting helmets with protective facemasks for use while batting and running the bases. Batters and all runners must always wear the caged helmets. ***Use of helmets without cages is not allowed***, for reasons of safety and to avoid disruptions to switch helmets for running the bases. A runner who intentionally removes a helmet while the ball is in play without the umpire's permission may be called out.
 - b. Batters must wear a helmet while on base. A runner who intentionally removes a helmet while the ball is in play may be called out.
 - c. Catchers must wear a catcher's helmet, mask, throat guard, chest protector and shin guards. Catchers must wear a cup.
 - d. Metal or composite bats must bear the **USA Baseball label**. Softball bats are **not** permitted. USSSA Bats are **not** permitted. Wood bats **are** permitted. This is the USA Baseball label:



26. "Slug Bunting" is prohibited. Slug bunting is a hard slap, swing, or half swing of the ball from a bunting stance. A batter who slug bunts will be called out.

Rules regarding the runner

27. Live and dead ball rule

- a. After the umpire calls "Play Ball," the ball is alive and remains alive until a rule described herein (ball controlled by the pitcher on the mound, hit batter, etc.) or the umpire calls time, at which time the ball is dead. When the ball is dead, no player may be put out, no bases may be run and no runs may be scored, except from acts that occurred while the ball was alive (such as an overthrow, a home run, interference, catcher's balk).
- b. When an overthrow leaves the field of play, the ball is dead. The runner is awarded one additional base on an overthrow from the mound, two additional bases on an overthrow from the field. When an overthrow remains in the field of play, the ball is alive and runners may advance at their own risk.
- c. The ball remains alive on a walk. The batter or runners may advance at their own risk until the umpire calls time or the ball is controlled by the pitcher on the mound.

28. Stealing

- a. Stealing second and third is permitted.
- b. No runner may steal home.
- c. Stealing third base: The ball is alive on an attempted steal of third. All runners may advance at their own risk.
- d. Runners on first and third. With runners on first and third, the runner on third may advance to home on a catcher's throw to second on an attempted steal.
- e. Pitcher/Catcher Exchange
 - i. The runner at third may advance at his/her own risk if the catcher throws the ball past the **pitcher**. This shall not be considered a stolen base.
 - ii. The runner **at third** may not advance on the catcher's throw to the pitcher. Other runners may advance at their own risk.
 - iii. The runner at third may not taunt the pitcher by continuing to take a lead after the pitcher has received the ball from the catcher. Once the exchange has been made the runner at third must return to the base.
 - iv. The pitcher need not be in contact with the rubber when receiving the ball from the catcher, as the pitcher should be encouraged to come forward to take the throw.
 - v. The ball is alive until it returns to the pitcher on the mound.
- f. Leads
 - i. No leads are permitted. Runners may not leave the base until the ball crosses the plate. If a runner is observed by the umpire to leave base before the ball crosses the plate, the ball is dead, and the runner must return to base and the batter to the batter's box. If a runner is observed to leave the base before the ball crosses the plate, the umpire will warn

the runner. Leaving early a second time in an inning will result in the runner being called out.

29. Control by the pitcher, runners cannot advance

- a. Once a pitcher on the mound controls the ball, runners may not advance. If, in the judgment of the umpire, the runner was more than half-way to the next base when the pitcher gained control of the ball on the mound, the runner will be awarded the next base. Otherwise, the player will return to the last base touched. The umpire will make all decisions relative to awarding bases in said situation.

30. Sliding

- a. When there is an imminent play at a base, a player must slide or stop (surrender) to avoid a collision. When there is an imminent play at a base, a player who does not slide or stop will be called out.
- b. No headfirst sliding into a base is permitted. If a player slides head first into a base, the player will be called out. Players may slide headfirst back to a base they have obtained.

31. Two runners on the same base: If two runners occupy the same base, the trailing runner can be tagged out. The lead runner can remain on base.

32. Interference

- a. On any interference call on the batter or a runner, the batter or runner is out and the ball is dead. No runs may score because of such interference.
- b. It is interference if, in the judgment of the umpire:
 - i. The batter hinders the catcher in an attempt to field the ball.
 - ii. The batter, with a runner on third, hinders a fielder from making a play at home plate.

- iii. Any member(s) of the offensive team gather around a base to which the runner is advancing to confuse, hinder or add difficulty to the fielders.
- iv. A runner willfully interferes with a fielder in the act of fielding the ball or fails to reasonably attempt to avoid a fielder.
- v. A batted ball touches a batter or runner in fair territory before passing an infielder. If a batted ball passes an infielder and hits a runner there is no interference.
- vi. The batter intentionally kicks or deflects the path of a batted ball in any manner.
- vii. A runner deliberately kicks or deflects a ball in play.
- viii. If the runner going from home to first touches a batted ball while running inside the first base line
- ix. If the runner is going from third to home and is hit with a batted ball while running inside the third base line.
- x. A coach at third base or first base, who by touching or holding the runner, physically assists that runner in returning to or leaving third or first base.
- xi. The catcher may not block the pathway of a runner attempting to score unless he has possession of the ball. If the catcher blocks the runner before he has the ball, the umpire may call the runner safe.
- xii. An infielder may not block the pathway of a runner in the base path attempting to advance unless he has possession of the ball. If the infielder blocks the path of the runner before he has the ball, the umpire may call obstruction and award the runner the base he would have received without the obstruction.

33. Appeals

- a. If after a fly ball is caught, a runner fails to retouch the base (tag-up) before advancing, or while advancing or returning to base, the runner fails to touch each base in order, the opposing team may ask the umpire for an appeal by throwing the ball to the base not touched. If the umpire saw the infraction, the runner is out on the appeal.
- b. The appeal must be made before the next pitch. If it occurs on a play that ends the inning, it must be made before the defensive team leaves the field.

34. Running out of base line. A runner who, in the judgment of the umpire, goes more than 3 feet out of the baseline to avoid a tag is out. A runner may leave the baseline only to avoid interfering with a fielder fielding a batted ball.

35. Glove, cap thrown at batted ball

- a. If a player throws a glove, cap or other item of apparel and touches a batted ball, the runner shall receive at least three bases without penalty and may advance to home at his/her own risk, unless, in the judgment of the umpire, the ball would have left the field of play as a home run, in which case the runner shall advance to home plate automatically.

36. Ground rule double. If a fair ball bounces over or is deflected over the home-run fence, goes under the fence, or gets stuck in the fence, the umpire shall award a ground rule double. The ball is dead at that point. If the ball goes around the fence, i.e., to left or right field, the ball is live. If no fence is present, the ball remains live unless it is interfered with. In that instance, it is the umpire's discretion as to where the runners would have ended up if not for the interference.

37. Pinch runners are not permitted, except when a player becomes injured or incapacitated and is not able to run. The pinch runner shall be the last batted out.

38. A courtesy runner for the catcher is permitted with two outs, to allow the player to put on the catcher's equipment. The courtesy runner shall be the last batted out.

Rules regarding the pitcher

39. Pitch count caps. No pitcher shall pitch more than 75 pitches in a game. Further, based on pitches thrown, a pitcher must satisfy the following required rest periods before pitching in a subsequent game:

Pitches Thrown	1-20	21-35	36-50	51-65	66+
Rest Days Required	0 Days Rest	1 Day Rest	2 Days Rest	3 Days Rest	4 Days Rest

For example, a pitcher who throws 40 pitches on Monday must rest two days (Tuesday and Wednesday) and may pitch again on Thursday. On Thursday, the pitcher may pitch up to the maximum of 75 pitches. In the interest of our players' arm health, coaches are encouraged, when making pitching decisions, to account for any pitches thrown by players on teams outside the league as well as those during games within the league.

If a pitcher crosses any of the pitch count thresholds during the last batter faced, the lower pitch threshold may be used to determine days of rest required. No pitcher may pitch on three consecutive days regardless of pitch count.

40. Pitcher removed.

- a. When a pitcher is removed, that player may reenter the game in any position on the field, except pitcher. Pitchers may not return to pitch, once removed.
- b. When a player is removed from pitching before three outs have been made, the player is credited with having pitched an inning regardless of how many batters were faced or outs recorded. One pitch constitutes an inning pitched.

- c. When a pitcher is removed, the substitution and pitch count total must be recorded in the scorebook. The pitch count total for each pitcher used shall be reported to the League Commissioner at the conclusion of the game.***

41. Hitting a batter. If the pitcher hits two batters in an inning or three batters in a game, the pitcher must be removed and cannot return to pitch for the remainder of the game.

42. Illegal pitch: Pitcher's Balk.

- a. If, in the judgment of the umpire, a pitcher does not have a foot in contact with the rubber when delivering the ball to home plate, the umpire shall record the pitch as a ball. On such an occasion, the umpire will call time, the ball is dead, and no runners may advance and no runs may score.
- b. Each pitcher will receive one warning before a pitcher's balk is called.

43. Visits by coach. A coach may visit a pitcher three times in an inning. The third trip to the pitcher in the same inning must result in the pitcher's removal.

44. Warm-up pitches. A new pitcher shall be allowed eight warm-up pitches. The umpire may allow for more warm-up pitches if a pitcher has to leave the game due injury or other unusual circumstances.

Rules regarding the coaches, assistant coaches, players, and spectators.

45. Marking the lines, bringing out the equipment and dugout positioning.

- a. It is the responsibility of all coaches of both teams to mark the foul lines and batter's box with chalk, place the bases in their proper position, bring out the batting helmets. The home team will provide the umpire with two new balls before the scheduled start-time.
- b. Each coach should come to the park knowing which is the home team. The home team shall always take the first-base dugout, and the visitors, the third-base dugout.

- c. All players, when not on the field, belong in the dugout, preferably on the bench. Only the next two hitters may be between the dugout and the cage.

46. Moving the game along

- a. The coach is responsible for moving the players on and off the field as quickly as possible, including having the catcher dressed and ready. Coaches, to the extent possible, should prepare line-ups, field assignments and substitutions in advance.
- b. Each player shall be in full uniform, including hat on head, shirt tucked into pants all the way around, and shoes well tied. The coach should make sure that each player is properly dressed before taking the field or coming up to bat. If a player wears batting gloves, these should be properly on the hands before the player comes up to bat.

47. Standards of conduct

- a. The head coach is responsible for the behavior of his/her assistants, players, and spectators.
- b. If a player throws or abuses equipment in any manner, the umpire will warn the player and the coach. If that player throws or abuses equipment again, the player will be ejected from the game.
- c. Players on the team at bat may not attempt, in any way, to distract or upset the opposing pitcher. If any member of the offensive team engages in such unsportsmanlike conduct, the umpire shall issue a team warning. A second occurrence, by any member of the offensive team, shall result in the batter being called out.
- d. If a player or coach is disrespectful or verbally abuses an umpire, the individual may be ejected from the game without warning and directed to leave the park immediately.
- e. The umpire has the discretion to issue one warning for disrespectful behavior. If the behavior does not stop immediately or reoccurs at

any time, the coach or player will be ejected from the game and asked to leave the park.

- f. If a spectator verbally abuses an umpire, the umpire will ask the coaches to join him in warning the individual(s) that if the abuse continues, he/she will be asked to leave the park. In extreme cases, where such behavior continues, the umpire will direct that the game be forfeited.
- g. The League holds its coaches and players to the highest standards of conduct and sportsmanship. If a coach or player demonstrates an unwillingness to meet those standards, the incident should be reported to the League Commissioner who will determine if further disciplinary action is warranted up to and including removal from the League.
- h. Coaches, players and spectators are expected to conduct themselves with the highest level of sportsmanship at all Mt. Airy Baseball events. Improper behavior includes, but is not limited to, verbal, physical and non-verbal taunting of any player, coach, or umpire. It also includes the use of noisemakers, musical instruments, bells, whistles, horns, or any amplified sound.
- i. There is to be no harassment of any kind directed to a pitcher, batter, or fielder, from the player's team or bench.
- j. The head coach is responsible for compliance by spectators, players, and any assistant coaches. Compliance is solely in the judgment of the umpire. Non-compliance will result in an umpire-issued warning to the coach. Coaches will be instructed to remind spectators, players and coaches of the rule and the consequences for non-compliance.
- k. If the behavior continues a second non-compliance will result in the ejection of the head coach. If an assistant coach is not available, the game will be forfeited. A third incident of non-compliance will also result in the game being forfeited

48. Spectator safety

- a. The open areas next to and around the dugouts should be occupied only by players, the head coach, designated assistant coaches, and the scorekeeper for each team. In the interest of safety and to minimize distractions, parents and others are not permitted to watch the game next to or behind the backstop. Spectators are also not permitted to watch the game next to or behind the dugouts. These areas should be kept clear to serve as an on-deck area for players to warm up for hitting or pitching as needed. No one is to swing a bat or throw a ball without coaching supervision.
- b. The dugout area is for players and coaches only. Friends, relatives, and others are not permitted to watch the game from the dugout area. Any spectator not observing these boundaries will be asked to move to the stands to safely watch the game.

Majors (AGES 11 & 12)

ESSENTIAL SKILLS

The Major League players continue to work on the development of fundamental baseball skills learned in AA and AAA. Advanced skills such as stealing, and bunting are taught and additional aspects of team play are introduced.

Competency or proficiency in catching the ball, throwing accurately, hitting and pitching are stressed. Hitters are now expected to swing at pitched balls and put the ball in play by the end of the season. Pitching skills are further developed.

Coaches should continue to emphasize good mechanics and accuracy. Those pitchers who can throw strikes consistently from a stretch position may begin to work on increasing their velocity. With the introduction of pitching and advanced skills, games become somewhat more competitive. However, the primary focus should remain learning and practicing the fundamental mechanics, good sportsmanship and having fun.

Throwing

- Turn to the side, back of front shoulder facing the target
- Breaks hands throwing arm extended (windmill motion),
- Elbow above the shoulder
- Hand on top of the ball
- Strides towards the throw
- Good follow-through, completes arm rotation
- Throws accurately (in middle of chest) from 60 feet (4 of 5 throws)

Hitting

Stance

- Feet balanced; knees bent
- Even weight distribution
- “Five eyes” on the pitcher
- Top hand over bottom hand
- Hands together
- Rear elbow relaxed

- Hands in, back and up (even with front shoulder)
- Bat in proper position: (1:00 right handers, 11:00 left handers)
- Squares to bunt in proper position

Stride

- Front foot makes, short, soft step forward
- Weight balanced over center of body

Swing

- Head stays on ball through swing
- Swings down and through the ball
- Pivots on back foot, shoelaces towards the pitcher
- Good follow through
- Swings at pitched ball
- Bunts at pitched ball

Fielding: Infield

- Balanced Starting Position
- Knees bent, rear end down to start
- Weight on balls of feet
- Glove open to the ball
- Hands out
- Slides right/left to keep ball glove and ball between the shoulders
- Fields ball in front
- Keeps knees bent, rear end down when fielding the ball
- Fields backhanded and forehanded
- Calls for fly balls
- Positions for cutoff throw
- SS and 2nd cover second appropriately (ball hit to left or right side)
- Backs up team-mates
- Catches thrown ball with two hands
- Catches batted ball with two hands

Fielding: Outfield

- In ready position, knees bent, eyes on the batter
- Catches with two hands
- Catches above the shoulders
- Turns and runs to ball right/left, before the ball is in the outfield
- Calls for fly balls
- Crow hops
- Throws to correct base
- Throws to cut-off
- Backs up team-mates

Baserunning

- Runs through first base on ball hit in the infield
- Turns towards second on ball hit in the outfield
- Watches coach on bases
- In ready position when on base, one foot out, ready to run
- Quick start from base when ball crosses the plate
- Runs to next base on ground balls
- Goes halfway or tags on fly balls as instructed by coach
- Slides feet first on close plays

Pitching

- Balanced starting position
- Grips ball on top
- Breaks hands, arms extended
- Elbow above the shoulder
- Strides towards the throw
- Eyes remain on target
- Good follow-through, completes arm rotation
- Front foot lands on ball of foot
- Good Fielding position
- Throws strikes 60% of time

Personal

- Encourages teammates

- Listens to coaches
- Pays attention in the field
- Communicates on the field before the play
- Runs to defensive position
- Runs off the field
- Helps coach put equipment away
- Stays on bench when team is at bat
- Shows leadership

RULES

General Information

The Major League players continue to work on the development of fundamental baseball skills learned in AA and AAA. Advanced skills are taught, and additional aspects of team play are introduced. Competency or proficiency in catching the ball, throwing accurately, hitting and pitching are stressed. Hitters are now expected to swing at pitched balls and put the ball in play by the end of the season. Pitching skills are further developed. Coaches should continue to emphasize good mechanics and accuracy. Those pitchers who can throw strikes consistently may begin to work on increasing their velocity. With the introduction of pitching and advanced skills, games become somewhat more competitive. However, the primary focus should remain learning and practicing the fundamental mechanics, good sportsmanship and having fun.

Majors Rules

1. Use regular baseball rules except as modified herein:
2. Everyone plays. Unlimited substitutions are permitted. All players must play at least two innings (six defensive outs) in the field by the fourth inning.
 - a. Scorekeepers must record in the scorebook and, upon request, report to the opposing team all substitutions.
 - b. If a player leaves the game due to injury or illness, that players will not be required to meet the participation rule.
 - c. Failure to comply with the participation rule will result in the game being forfeited.
3. Bat the roster. All players bat in order prior to the lead-off batter batting for a second time regardless of whether a player plays in the field. Players bat in order until 3 outs are made or the 6 run rule is invoked. If a player comes after the game begins, that player is added to the bottom of the batting order.

Players must arrive prior to the start of the third inning to be eligible to play and meet the participation rule.

4. Unlimited Substitutions, except pitcher. A player, once substituted for at a position in the field, may reenter the game at any time, in any position on the field, except pitcher. A pitcher may not reenter the game as a pitcher. (See: VI. Rules Regarding the Pitcher)
5. 6 run rule. No team shall be allowed to score more than six runs in a half-inning under any circumstances. When the 6th run is scored, the half-inning is concluded regardless of outs and a new half inning begins.
6. Mercy Rule: if a team is leading by more than 6 runs at the end of the fifth inning, or more than 12 runs at the end of the fourth inning the umpire shall end the game.
 - a. ***When team has a 10-run lead, they must play station to station baseball as a gesture of good sportsmanship until the lead is 9 runs or less. A team violating this rule will receive a warning for the first violation with the player returning to the base. A runner violating this rule after the team has received a warning will be called out.***
7. Forfeits for too few players. If a team is not able to field eight players in uniform within 15 minutes of the scheduled start time, the game will be recorded as a forfeit, unless, in the judgment of the umpire, a delay is unavoidable. The game should then be played using a substitute(s) from the opponent's roster. The umpire shall be the sole judge of recording a forfeit.
 - a. If at any time during the game, a team is unable to field 8 players in uniform, the game shall be recorded as a forfeit.
 - b. For the sole purpose of avoiding a forfeit, teams may field up to two non-rostered players from a younger division. A called-up player must bat at the end of the batting order, may not pitch, and may not play more innings in the field than any rostered player in attendance.

8. When fielding eight players, the ninth position in the batting order shall be recorded as an out.
9. Length of game is 6 innings or two hours, whichever comes first. No inning can be started after 2 hours of play have elapsed. The umpire shall be the sole judge of the time elapsed.
10. Official and called games
 - a. A game must go four innings to be official, 3 1/2 innings if the home team is leading going into the bottom of the 4th. If a game is called before it becomes an official game due to time, weather, or darkness, it will be resumed from where it left off. Called games may be rescheduled with the Major League Commissioner.
 - b. An official game that is tied after six innings or when time runs out, shall be recorded as a tie.
11. Assignment of players, adding players: Players may only be added to a team by the Major League Commissioner.
12. Violation of the above League rules should be reported to the League Commissioner who will decide if any further action is warranted up to and including forfeiture of the game.
13. Practices will be scheduled by the coach. Players are expected to attend and participate in practices. If a player repeatedly misses practices, the player and his/her parent will receive a warning from the coach that the player may have to sit out a game, if attendance at practice does not improve.
 - a. Every child will miss practice on occasion. The sanction of sitting out a game is reserved for those players, who continually do not come to scheduled practices. If a child is to sit out a game, the coach will discuss the situation with the League Commissioner before taking such action.

Responsibility of the Umpire

14. Authority

- a. The umpire has the authority to enforce all League rules and is responsible for the conduct of the game. Each umpire also has authority to rule on any point not specifically covered in these rules. Any umpire's decision, which involves judgment such as fair or foul, safe or out, is final. No coach or player can object to any such decision.
 - b. If there is reasonable doubt that an umpire's decision is in conflict with the rules, a coach may appeal to the umpire who made the decision and request that the umpire consult the rulebook or League officials, if available, for further information, before making a final decision. The coach shall not go over the umpire's head directly to League officials. All appeals must be made in a respectful manner. (See Responsibility of Coaches, section VII,2)
 - c. If, after reviewing the rule, a coach continues to believe the umpire's decision conflicts with the rules, a coach may notify the umpire the game is being played under protest. The umpire will record the protest in the official scorebook (the home team's book, if there is no official scorekeeper) and report the protest to the Major League Commissioner for review, immediately after the game. Such protests should be rare and must never result in a delay of the game.
 - d. If the League does not supply an official scorekeeper, the home team's book, shall be considered the official scorebook and signed by the umpire at the conclusion of the game to indicate that both teams agree with the outcome.
15. Deciding fitness of the field. The umpire will start the game unless instructed otherwise by a League Commissioner. The League Commissioner will inform coaches at least one hour before game time if the field is clearly not playable.
16. Starting the game. The umpire proceeds to home plate where and is met by the coaches of the opposing teams. The home team and visiting team shall give their batting order to the opposing team prior to meeting at home plate. When the umpire has determined that batting orders have been exchanged,

the umpire is in charge of the playing field. The umpire will explain any ground rules to the coaches, direct the defensive team to take the field and call Play Ball to start the game.

17. Live and dead ball rule. After the umpire calls Play Ball, the ball is alive and remains alive until a rule described herein causes a dead ball or the umpire calls time. The ball remains alive on a walk, until the umpire calls time. When the ball is dead, no player may be put out, no bases may be run and no runs may be scored, except from acts that occurred while the ball was alive (such as an overthrow, a home run, interference).
18. Umpire's field positions. The umpire should take whatever position on the field allows the best view of the play.

Rules regarding the batter

19. Throwing the bat. Players may not throw the bat under any circumstances. If player throws the bat, the umpire will issue one team warning to the player and the head coach. If any player on the team throws a bat again during the game, the player will be called out. If the batter is called out for throwing the bat, the ball is dead and all runners shall return to their original bases.
20. Batting out of turn. A batter who bats out of turn can be replaced by the proper batter any time during the at bat once an improper batter is brought to the umpire's attention. The proper batter will then inherit the count. No penalty is incurred.
21. Hit by a pitched ball
- a. When a batter is touched by a pitched ball outside the strike zone, it is a dead ball, and the batter is awarded first base. No runners may advance.
 - b. If the batter is touched by a pitched ball in the strike zone, it shall be called a strike. It is a dead ball, and no base is awarded and no runners may advance.

- c. If a batter swings at a pitch and is touched by the pitch, it shall be called a strike. It is a dead ball, and no base is awarded and no runners may advance.
22. Foul tip. If a catcher holds a foul tip on the third strike, the batter is out. The ball remains live and the runners may advance at their own risk.
23. Infield fly rule. The infield fly rule is used at this level.
24. Dropped third strike rule. No dropped third strike rule is used. If the catcher drops or misses a third strike, the batter is out. Runners may advance at their own risk.
25. Intentional Walk. A batter may be walked intentionally by the pitcher notifying the umpire of the intentional walk. A player may only be walked intentionally once per game. While permitted, the League discourages intentional walks and strongly suggests they be used sparingly.
26. Equipment rules
- a. Batters must wear batting helmets with cages. Batter must leave the batting helmet on until the umpire stops play. A runner who intentionally removes a helmet while the ball is in play may be called out.
 - b. Catchers must wear a catcher's helmet, mask, throat guard, chest protector and shin guards. Catchers must wear a cup.
 - c. Metal or composite bats must bear the **USA Baseball label**. Softball bats are **not** permitted. USSSA Bats are **not** permitted. Wood bats **are** permitted. This is the USA Baseball label:



- d. Players may not wear metal spikes or cleats.

27. "Slug Bunting" is prohibited. Slug bunting is a hard slap, swing or half swing of the ball from a bunting stance. A batter who slug bunts will be called out.

Rules regarding the runner

28. Live and dead ball rule

- a. After the umpire calls Play Ball, the ball is alive and remains alive until a rule described herein or the umpire calls time at which time the ball is dead. When the ball is dead, no player may be put out, no bases may be run and no runs may be scored, except from acts that occurred while the ball was alive (such as an overthrow, a homerun, interference, catcher's balk).
- b. When a thrown ball leaves the field of play (enters a dead zone area), the ball is dead. The runners are awarded one additional base on such a throw from the mound, two additional bases on such a throw from the field. When an overthrow remains in play, the ball is alive, and runners may advance at their own risk.
- c. The ball remains alive on a walk. The batter or runners may advance at their own risk until the umpire calls time.

29. Leads and Stealing

- a. Stealing of all bases is permitted, but a team may only steal second base twice per inning. There is no limit on steals of other bases.

- b. Leads are permitted.

30. Sliding.

- a. Players may not run into each other on the bases. When there is an imminent play at a base, a player must slide or stop (surrender) to avoid a collision. When there is an imminent play at a base, a player who does not slide or stop to avoid a collision will be called out.
- b. No headfirst sliding into a base is permitted. If a player slides head first into a base, the player will be called out. Players may slide headfirst back to a base they have obtained.

31. Two runners on the same base. If two runners occupy the same base, the last runner can be tagged out. The lead runner can remain on the base.

32. Interference. On any interference call on the batter or a runner, the batter or runner is out, and the ball is dead. No runs may score because of such interference. It is interference if, in the judgment of the umpire:

- a. The batter hinders the catcher in an attempt to field the ball.
- b. The batter, with a runner on third, hinders a fielder from making a play at home plate.
- c. Any member(s) of the offensive team gather around a base to which the runner is advancing to confuse, hinder or add difficulty to the fielders.
- d. A runner willfully interferes with a fielder in the act of fielding the ball or fails to reasonably attempt to avoid a fielder.
- e. A batted ball touches a batter or runner in fair territory before passing an infielder. If a batted ball passes an infielder and hits a runner there is no interference.
- f. The batter intentionally kicks or deflects the path of a batted ball in any manner.

- g. A runner deliberately kicks or deflects a ball in play.
- h. If the runner going from home to first touches a batted ball while running inside the first base line
- i. If the runner is going from third to home and is hit with a batted ball while running inside the third base line.
- j. A coach at third base or first base, by touching or holding the runner, physically assists that runner in returning to or leaving third or first base.
- k. The catcher may not block the pathway of a runner attempting to score unless he has possession of the ball. If the catcher blocks the runner before he has the ball, the umpire may call the runner safe.
- l. An infielder may not block the pathway of a runner in the base path attempting to advance unless he has possession of the ball. If the infielder blocks the path of the runner before he has the ball, the umpire may call obstruction and award the runner the base he would have received without the obstruction.

33. Appeals: Leaving base too soon after a fly ball (not tagging up); Not touching bases in order.

- a. If after a fly ball is caught, a runner fails to retouch the base (tag-up) before advancing, or the while advancing or returning to base, the runner fails to touch each base in order, the opposing team may ask the umpire for an appeal by throwing the ball to the base not touched. If the umpire saw the infraction, the runner is out on the appeal.
- b. The appeal must be made before the next pitch. If it occurs on a play that ends the inning, it must be made before the defensive team leaves the field.

34. Running out of base line. A runner who, the judgment of the umpire, goes more than 3 feet out of the baseline to avoid a tag is out. A runner may leave the baseline to avoid interfering with a fielder fielding a batted ball.

35. Protective equipment rules. Batters must always wear batting helmets when on base. A player who intentionally removes a helmet while the ball is in play may be called out.
36. Glove, cap thrown at batted ball. If a player throws a glove, cap or other item of apparel and touches a batted ball, the runner shall receive at least three bases without penalty and may advance to home at his/her own risk, unless, in the judgment of the umpire, the ball would have left the field of play as a home run, in which case the runner shall advance to home plate automatically.
37. Ground rule double. If a fair ball bounces over or is deflected over the home-run fence, goes under the fence, or gets stuck in the fence, the umpire shall award a ground rule double. The ball is dead at that point. If the ball goes around the fence, i.e., to left or right field, the ball is live. If no fence is present, the ball remains live unless it is interfered with. In that instance, it is the umpire's discretion as to where the runners would have ended up if not for the interference.
38. Pinch runners are not permitted, except when a player becomes injured or incapacitated and is not able to run. The pinch runner shall be the last batted out.
39. A courtesy runner for the catcher is permitted with two outs, to allow the player to put on the catcher's equipment. The courtesy runner shall be the last batted out.

Rules regarding the pitcher

40. Pitch count caps. No pitcher shall pitch more than 85 pitches in a game. Further, based on pitches thrown, a pitcher must satisfy the following required rest periods before pitching in a subsequent game:

Pitches Thrown	1-20	21-35	36-50	51-65	66+
Rest Days Required	0 Days Rest	1 Day Rest	2 Days Rest	3 Days Rest	4 Days Rest

For example, a pitcher who throws 40 pitches on Monday must rest two days (Tuesday and Wednesday) and may pitch again on Thursday. On Thursday, the pitcher may pitch up to the maximum of 85 pitches. In the interest of our players' arm health, coaches are encouraged, when making pitching decisions, to account for any pitches thrown by players on teams outside the league as well as those during games within the league

If a pitcher crosses any of the pitch count thresholds during the last batter faced, the lower pitch threshold may be used to determine days of rest required. No pitcher may pitch on three consecutive days regardless of pitch count.

41. Pitcher removed.

- a. When a pitcher is removed, that player may reenter the game in any position on the field, except pitcher. Pitchers may not return to pitch, once removed.
- b. When a player is removed from pitching before three outs have been made, the player is credited with having pitched an inning regardless of how many batters were faced or outs recorded. One pitch constitutes an inning pitched.

42. ***When a pitcher is removed, the substitution and pitch count total must be recorded in the scorebook. The pitch count total for each pitcher used shall be reported to the League Commissioner at the conclusion of the game.***

43. Hitting a batter. If the pitcher hits two batters in an inning or three batters in a game, the pitcher must be removed and cannot return to pitch for the remainder of the game.

44. Illegal pitches: Pitcher's Balks

- a. A pitcher is restricted to a certain set of motions and one of two basic pitching positions (wind-up or stretch) before and during a pitch; if these regulations are violated with one or more runners on

base, an umpire may call a balk. On such an occasion, the umpire will call time and the ball is dead.

- b. With a runner on base and the pitcher on or astride (with one leg on each side of) the rubber, it is a balk when the pitcher:
 - i. turns the shoulders after bringing the hands together during or after the stretch.
 - ii. while on the rubber, makes a motion associated with his pitch and does not complete the delivery.
 - iii. when pitching from the set position, fails to make a complete stop with his hands together before beginning to pitch.
 - iv. feints to a base without first lifting his pivot foot backward off the pitching off rubber
 - v. when in contact with the rubber, throws from the mound to a base without stepping toward (gaining distance in the direction of) that base.
 - vi. throws or feints a throw from the rubber to an unoccupied base, unless a play is imminent.
 - vii. steps or feints from the rubber towards first or third base without completing the throw (doing so to second base is legal).
 - viii. drops the ball while on the rubber, even if by accident, if the ball does not subsequently cross a foul line.
 - ix. after bringing his/her hands together on the rubber, separates them except in making a pitch or a throw.
 - x. stands on or astride the rubber without the ball, or mimics a pitch without the ball.

- xi. with his feet in the windup position, steps off with the non-pivot foot and then does not deliver a pitch (for a right-handed pitcher, the "pivot foot" is the right foot)
 - xii. fails to pitch to the batter when the entire non-pivot foot passes behind the perpendicular plane of the back edge of the pitcher's plate, except when feinting or throwing to second base to put out a runner
 - xiii. switches his pitching position from the windup to the set (or vice versa) without properly disengaging the rubber.
 - xiv. unnecessarily delays the game
- c. A pitcher is not allowed to feint toward third (or second) base, and then turn and throw or feint to first base if his pivot foot disengages the rubber after his initial feint. This is called the "fake to third, throw to first" play. High school and Major League Baseball classified this as a balk beginning with the 2013 season.
 - d. Each pitcher will receive one warning before a pitcher's balk is called.

45. Visits by coach. A coach may visit a pitcher three times in an inning. The third trip to the pitcher in the same inning must result in the pitcher's removal.

46. Warm-up pitches. A new pitcher shall be allowed eight warm-up pitches. The umpire may allow for more warm-up pitches if a pitcher has to leave the game due injury or other unusual circumstances.

Rules regarding the coaches, assistant coaches, players, and spectators

47. Marking the lines, bringing out the equipment and dugout positioning

- a. It is the responsibility of all coaches of both teams to mark the foul lines and batters box with chalk, place the bases in their proper position, bring out the batting helmets. The home team will provide the umpire with two new balls before the scheduled start-time.

- b. Each coach should come to the park knowing which is the home team. The home team shall always take the first-base dugout, and the visitors, the third-base dugout. The umpire should thus not even have to ask which team is at home.
- c. All players, when not on the field, belong in the dugout, preferably on the bench. Only the next two hitters may be between the dugout and the cage.

48. Moving the game along

- a. The coach is responsible for moving the players on and off the field as quickly as possible, including having the catcher dressed and ready. Coaches, to the extent possible, should prepare line-ups, field assignments and substitutions in advance.
- b. Each player shall be in full uniform, including hat on head, shirt tucked into pants all the way around, and shoes well tied. The coach should make sure that each player is properly dressed before taking the field or coming up to bat. If a player wears batting gloves, these should be properly on the hands before the player comes up to bat.

49. Standards of conduct

- a. The head coach is responsible for the behavior of his/her assistants, players, and spectators.
- b. If a player throws or abuses equipment in any manner, the umpire will warn the player and the coach. If that player throws or abuses equipment again, the player will be ejected from the game.
- c. Players on the team at bat may not attempt, in any way, to distract or upset the opposing pitcher. If any member of the offensive team engages in such unsportsmanlike conduct, the umpire shall issue a team warning. A second occurrence, by any member of the offensive team, shall result in the batter being called out.

- d. If a player or coach is disrespectful or verbally abuses an umpire, the individual may be ejected from the game without warning and directed to leave the park immediately. The umpire has the discretion to issue one warning for disrespectful behavior. If the behavior does not stop immediately or reoccurs at any time, the coach or player will be ejected from the game and asked to leave the park.
- e. If a spectator verbally abuses an umpire, the umpire will ask the coaches to join him in warning the individual(s) that if the abuse continues, the individual will be asked to leave the park. In extreme cases, where such behavior continues, the umpire will direct that the game be forfeited.
- f. The League holds its coaches and players to the highest standards of conduct and sportsmanship. If a coach or player demonstrates an unwillingness to meet those standards, the incident should be reported to the League Commissioner who will determine if further disciplinary action is warranted up to and including removal from the League.
- g. Coaches, players, and spectators are expected to conduct themselves with the highest level of sportsmanship at all Mt. Airy Baseball events. Improper behavior includes, but is not limited to, verbal, physical and non-verbal taunting of any player, coach or umpire. It also includes the use of noisemakers, musical instruments, bells, whistles, horns, or any amplified sound.
- h. There is to be no harassment of any kind directed to a pitcher, batter, or fielder, from the player's team or bench.
- i. The head coach is responsible for compliance by spectators, players, and any assistant coaches. Compliance is solely in the judgment of the umpire. Non-compliance will result in an umpire-issued warning to the coach. Coaches will be instructed to remind spectators, players and coaches of the rule and the consequences for non-compliance.

- j. If the behavior continues a second non-compliance will result in the ejection of the head coach. If an assistant coach is not available, the game will be forfeited. A third incident of non-compliance will also result in the game being forfeited.

50. Spectator safety

- a. The open areas next to and around the dugouts should be occupied only by players, the head coach, designated assistant coaches, and the scorekeeper for each team. In the interest of safety and to minimize distractions, parents and others are not permitted to watch the game next to or behind the backstop. Spectators are also not permitted to watch the game next to or behind the dugouts. These areas should be kept clear to serve as an on-deck area for players to warm up for hitting or pitching as needed. No one is to swing a bat or throw a ball without coaching supervision.
- b. The dugout area is for players and coaches only. Friends, relatives, and others are not permitted to watch the game from the dugout area. Any spectator not observing these boundaries will be asked to move to the stands to safely watch the game.

Seniors (AGES 13-15)

RULES

General Information

The Senior League for players aged 13-15 is intended to be a community based intramural league emphasizing skill development, good sportsmanship, and fun competition. The games will be played on a full-size regulation baseball diamond (60'-6" pitching distance, 90' baselines).

Seniors Rules

1. Official Baseball Rules will govern, except as modified herein.

http://mlb.mlb.com/documents/0/8/0/268272080/2018_Official_Baseball_Rules.pdf

2. Everyone plays: Unlimited defensive substitutions are permitted. All players must play at least two innings (six defensive outs) in the field by the fourth inning. If a player leaves the game due to injury or illness, that player will not be required to meet the participation rule. Failure to comply with the participation rule will result in the game being forfeited.
3. Bat the roster: All players bat in order prior to the lead-off batter batting for a second time regardless of which players are playing in the field. Players bat in order until 3 outs are made or the 6 run rule is invoked. If a player arrives after the game begins, that player is added to the bottom of the batting order. Players must arrive prior to the start of the third inning to be eligible to play and meet the participation rule.
4. Substitutions: A player, once substituted for at a position in the field, may reenter the game at any time, in any position on the field. A pitcher removed from the mound may not participate as a pitcher for the remainder of the game. (See also Rules Regarding the Pitcher.)
5. 6 run rule: No team shall be allowed to score more than six runs in a half-inning under any circumstances. When the 6th run is scored, the half-inning is concluded regardless of outs and a new half-inning begins.

6. Mercy Rule: if a team is leading by more than 6 runs at the end of the sixth inning, or more than 12 runs at the end of the fifth inning the umpire shall end the game.
7. Pitchers' Pitch Counts and Days of Rest: The Senior League will follow the national Pitch Smart guidelines for 13–14-year-old players. The guidelines can be found here:

<https://www.mlb.com/pitch-smart/pitching-guidelines>. See the details under Rules Regarding the Pitcher below.

8. Forfeits for too few players: If a team is not able to field eight players in uniform within 15 minutes of the scheduled start time, the game will be recorded as a forfeit, unless, in the judgment of the umpire, a delay is unavoidable. The game should then be played using a substitute(s) from the opponent's roster. The umpire shall be the sole judge of recording a forfeit.

If at any time during the game, a team is unable to field 8 players in uniform, the game shall be recorded as a forfeit.

When a team is playing with only eight players, the ninth position in the batting order shall be recorded as an out.

9. Length of game: A game shall be seven innings or two hours long, whichever comes first. No inning can be started after two hours of play have elapsed. The umpire shall be the sole judge of the time elapsed.
10. Official and called games: A game must go four innings to be official, 3 1/2 innings if the home team is leading going into the bottom of the 4th. If a game is called before it becomes an official game due to time, weather or darkness, it will be resumed from where it left off. Called games may be rescheduled with the Senior League Commissioner.
11. Tie game: An official game that is tied after seven innings or when time runs out, shall be recorded as a tie.
12. Assignment of players, adding players: Players may only be added to a team by the Senior League Commissioner.

13. Violation of the above League rules should be reported to the League Commissioner who will decide if any further action is warranted up to and including forfeiture of the game.
14. Practices will be scheduled by the coach, based on field assignments provided by the League. Players are expected to attend and participate in practices.

Responsibility of the Umpire

1. Authority

The umpire has the authority to enforce all League rules and is responsible for the conduct of the game. Each umpire also has authority to rule on any point not specifically covered in these rules. Any umpire's decision, which involves judgment such as fair or foul, safe or out, is final. No coach or player can object to any such decision.

If there is reasonable doubt that an umpire's decision is in conflict with the rules, a coach may appeal to the umpire who made the decision and request that the umpire consult the rulebook or League officials, if available, for further information, before making a final decision. The coach shall not go over the umpire's head directly to League officials. All appeals must be made in a respectful manner (see Responsibility of Coaches).

If, after reviewing the rule, a coach continues to believe the umpire's decision conflicts with the rules, a coach may notify the umpire the game is being played under protest. The umpire will record the protest in the official scorebook (the home team's book, if there is no official scorekeeper) and report the protest to the Senior League Commissioner for review, immediately after the game. ***Such protests should be rare and must never result in a delay of the game.***

If the League does not supply an official scorekeeper, the home team's book, shall be considered the official scorebook and signed by the umpire at the conclusion of the game to indicate that both teams agree with the outcome.

2. Deciding fitness of the field

The umpire will start the game unless instructed otherwise by a League Commissioner or designated league official. The League Commissioner or designated league official will inform coaches at least one hour before game time if the field is clearly not playable.

3. Starting the game

The umpire proceeds to home plate where and is met by the coaches of the opposing teams. The home team and visiting team shall give their batting order to the opposing team prior to meeting at home plate. When the umpire has determined that batting orders have been exchanged, the umpire is in charge of the playing field. The umpire will explain any ground rules to the coaches, direct the defensive team to take the field and call Play Ball to start the game.

4. Live and dead ball rule

After the umpire calls Play Ball, the ball is alive and remains alive until a rule described herein causes a dead ball or the umpire calls time. The ball remains alive on a walk, until the umpire calls time. When the ball is dead, no player may be put out, no bases may be run and no runs may be scored, except from acts that occurred while the ball was alive (such as an overthrow, a home run, interference).

5. Umpire's field positions

The umpire should take whatever position on the field allows the best view of the play.

Rules regarding the batter

1. Throwing the bat

Players may not throw the bat under any circumstances. If player throws the bat, the umpire will issue one team warning to the player and the head coach. If any player on the team throws a bat again during the game, the player will

be called out. If the batter is called out for throwing the bat, the ball is dead and all runners shall return to their original bases.

2. Batting out of turn

A batter who bats out of turn without a coach notifying the umpire and the opposing team scorekeeper may be called out if the opposing team appeals the umpire before the at bat is complete. The at bat is complete once a pitch has been thrown to the next batter. No appeal can be made after a pitch is thrown to the next batter.

3. Hit by a pitched ball

When a batter is touched by a pitched ball outside the strike zone, it is a dead ball, and the batter is awarded first base. No runners may advance, unless forced to do so by the batter's award of first base.

If the batter is touched by a pitched ball in the strike zone, it shall be called a strike. It is a dead ball, and no base is awarded and no runners may advance.

If a batter swings at a pitch and is touched by the pitch, it shall be called a strike. It is a dead ball, and no base is awarded and no runners may advance.

4. Foul tip

If a catcher holds a foul tip on the third strike, the batter is out on a strikeout. The ball remains live, and the runners may advance at their own risk.

5. Infield fly rule

The infield fly rule **is** used at this level.

6. Dropped third strike rule

The dropped third strike rule **is** used at this level.

7. Intentional Walk

A batter may be walked intentionally by the coach notifying the umpire of the intentional walk. A player may only be walked intentionally once per game. While permitted, the League discourages intentional walks and strongly suggests they be used sparingly.

8. Protective equipment rules

Batters and baserunners must wear batting helmets. Batter must leave the batting helmet on until the umpire stops play. A runner who intentionally removes a helmet while the ball is in play may be called out.

Catchers must wear a catcher's helmet, mask, chest protector and shin guards. Catchers must wear a cup.

9. Bats: **Bats must be either wood bats, BBCOR certified bats, or USA Baseball approved bats.** A batter will be called out for using an illegal bat if the bat is identified during the plate appearance or prior to the first pitch being thrown to the next batter.

Rules regarding the runner

1. Live and dead ball rule

After the umpire calls Play Ball, the ball is alive and remains alive until a rule described herein or the umpire calls time at which time the ball is dead. When the ball is dead, no player may be put out, no bases may be run and no runs may be scored, except from acts that occurred while the ball was alive (such as an overthrow, a homerun, interference, catcher's balk).

When a thrown ball leaves the field of play (enters a dead zone area), the ball is dead. The runners are awarded one additional base on such a throw from the mound, two additional bases on such a throw from the field. When an overthrow remains in play, the ball is alive, and runners may advance at their own risk.

The ball remains alive on a walk. The batter or runners may advance at their own risk until the umpire calls time.

2. Sliding

Players may not run into each other on the bases. When there is an imminent play at a base, a player must slide, stop (surrender), or veer out of the way to avoid a collision. When there is an imminent play at a base, a player who does not slide or attempt to avoid a collision will be called out.

3. Two runners on the same base

If two runners occupy the same base, the last runner can be tagged out. The lead runner can remain on the base.

4. Interference

On any interference call on the batter or a runner, the batter or runner is out and the ball is dead.

It is interference if, in the judgment of the umpire:

- a. The batter hinders the catcher in an attempt to field the ball.
- b. The batter, with a runner on third, hinders a fielder from making a play at home plate.
- c. Any member(s) of the offensive team gather around a base to which the runner is advancing to confuse, hinder or add difficulty to the fielders.
- d. A runner willfully interferes with a fielder in the act of fielding the ball or fails to reasonably attempt to avoid a fielder.
- e. A batted ball touches a batter or runner in fair territory before passing an infielder. If a batted ball passes an infielder and hits a runner there is no interference.
- f. The batter intentionally kicks or deflects the path of a batted ball in any manner.
- g. A runner deliberately kicks or deflects a ball in play.
- h. If the runner going from home to first touches a batted ball while running inside the first base line

i. If the runner is going from third to home and is hit with a batted ball while running inside the third base line.

j. A coach at third base or first base, by touching or holding the runner, physically assists that runner in returning to or leaving third or first base.

k. The catcher may not block the pathway of a runner attempting to score unless he has possession of the ball. If the catcher blocks the runner before he has the ball, the umpire may call the runner safe.

l. An infielder may not block the pathway of a runner in the base path attempting to advance unless he has possession of the ball. If the infielder blocks the path of the runner before he has the ball, the umpire may call obstruction and award the runner the base he would have received without the obstruction.

5. Appeal Play:

If after a fly ball is caught, a runner fails to retouch the base (tag-up) before advancing, or the while advancing or returning to base, the runner fails to touch each base in order, the opposing team may ask the umpire for an appeal by throwing the ball to the base not touched. If the umpire saw the infraction, the runner is out on the appeal.

The appeal must be made before the next pitch. If it occurs on a play that ends the inning, it must be made before the defensive team leaves the field.

6. Running out of base line

A runner who, the judgment of the umpire, goes more than 3 feet out of the baseline to avoid a tag is out. A runner may leave the baseline to avoid interfering with a fielder fielding a batted ball.

7. Glove, cap thrown at batted ball

If a players throws a glove, cap or other item of apparel and touches a batted ball, the runner shall receive at least three bases without penalty and may advance to home at his/her own risk, unless, in the judgment of the umpire,

the ball would have left the field of play as a home run, in which case the runner shall advance to home plate automatically.

8. Ground rule double

If a fair ball bounces over or is deflected over the home-run fence, goes under the fence or gets stuck in the fence, the umpire shall award a ground rule double. The ball is dead at that point. If the ball goes around the fence, i.e., to left or right field, the ball is live. If no fence is present, the ball remains live unless it is interfered with. In that instance, it is the umpire's discretion as to where the runners would have ended up if not for the interference.

9. Pinch runners: Pinch runners are not permitted, except when a player becomes injured or incapacitated and is not able to run. The pinch runner shall be the last batted out.

10. Courtesy runner: A courtesy runner for the catcher is permitted (but not required) with two outs, to allow the player to put on the catcher's equipment. The courtesy runner shall be the last batted out.

Rules regarding the pitcher

1. Pitch Counts and Days of Rest

The Senior League will follow the national Pitch Smart guidelines for 13–14-year-old players, slightly modified. All pitches will be counted by the coach and/or scorekeeper and reported to the Senior League Commissioner following the game or entered into the league-wide web based spreadsheet. After each inning, team scorekeepers should reconcile and agree upon the pitch counts for both teams' pitchers. In the interest of our players' arm health, coaches are encouraged, when making pitching decisions, to account for any pitches thrown by players on teams outside the league as well as those during games within the league.

Pitch count thresholds and mandatory days of rest shall be as follows:

Pitches Thrown	Days of Rest Required
1-20	0 days
21-35	1 day of rest
36-50	2 days of rest
51-65	3 days of rest
66+	4 days of rest

If a pitcher crosses any of the pitch count thresholds during the last batter faced, the lower pitch threshold may be used to determine days of rest required. No pitcher may pitch on three consecutive days regardless of pitch count. **The maximum number of pitches that any pitcher is allowed to throw in any one day is 85.**

2. Pitcher removed

When a pitcher is removed, that player may reenter the game in any position on the field, except pitcher. Pitchers may not return to pitch, once removed. When a pitcher is removed, the substitution and the number of pitches thrown must be recorded in the scorebook and reported to the umpire and the opposing team.

3. Hitting a batter

If the pitcher hits two batters in an inning or three batters in a game, the pitcher must be removed and cannot return to pitch for the remainder of the game.

4. Illegal pitches: Pitcher's Balks: All balks will be called at the discretion of the umpire. One "balk warning" will be issued per pitcher. Detailed definition of a Balk is below.

A pitcher is restricted to a certain set of motions and one of two basic [pitching positions](#) (wind-up or stretch) before and during a pitch; if these regulations

are violated with one or more runners on base, an umpire may call a balk. On such an occasion, the umpire will call time and the ball is dead.

With a runner on base and the pitcher on or astride (with one leg on each side of) the rubber, it is a balk when the pitcher:

- turns the shoulders after bringing the hands together during or after the stretch.
- while on the rubber, makes a motion associated with his pitch and does not complete the delivery.
- when pitching from the set position, fails to make a complete stop with his hands together before beginning to pitch.
- feints to a base without first lifting his pivot foot backward off the pitching off rubber
- when in contact with the rubber, throws from the mound to a base without stepping toward (gaining distance in the direction of) that base.
- throws or feints a throw from the rubber to an unoccupied base, unless a play is imminent.
- steps or feints from the rubber towards first or third base without completing the throw (doing so to second base is legal).
- drops the ball while on the rubber, even if by accident, if the ball does not subsequently cross a foul line.
- after bringing his/her hands together on the rubber, separates them except in making a pitch or a throw.
- stands on or astride the rubber without the ball or mimics a pitch without the ball.
- with his feet in the windup position, steps off with the non-pivot foot and then does not deliver a pitch (for a right-handed pitcher, the “pivot foot” is the right foot)

- fails to pitch to the batter when the entire non-pivot foot passes behind the perpendicular plane of the back edge of the pitcher's plate, except when feinting or throwing to second base in an attempt to put out a runner.
- switches his pitching position from the windup to the set (or vice versa) without properly disengaging the rubber.
- unnecessarily delays the game

5. Visits by coach

A manager or coach may visit the mound a **maximum of three times in a game**, not counting visits to make a pitching change.

6. Warm-up pitches

A new pitcher shall be allowed eight warm-up pitches. The umpire may allow for more warm-up pitches if a pitcher must leave the game due injury or other unusual circumstances.

Rules regarding the coaches, assistant coaches, players, and spectators

1. Marking the lines, bringing out the equipment and dugout positioning

It is the responsibility of all coaches of both teams to mark the foul lines and batter's box with chalk, place the bases in their proper position, bring out the batting helmets. The home team will provide the umpire with two new balls *before the scheduled start-time*.

Each coach should come to the park knowing which is the home team. The home team shall always take the first-base dugout, and the visitors, the third-base dugout. The umpire should thus not even have to ask which team is at home.

All players, when not on the field, belong in the dugout, preferably on the bench. Only the next two hitters may be between the dugout and the cage.

2. Moving the game along

The coach is responsible for moving the players on and off the field as quickly as possible, including having the catcher dressed and ready. Coaches, to the extent possible, should prepare line-ups, field assignments and substitutions in advance.

Each player shall be in full uniform, including hat on head, shirt tucked into pants all the way around, and shoes well tied. The coach should make sure that each player is properly dressed before taking the field or coming up to bat. If a player wears batting gloves, these should be properly on the hands before the player comes up to bat.

3. Standards of conduct

The head coach is responsible for the behavior of his/her assistants, players and spectators.

If a player throws or abuses equipment in any manner, the umpire will warn the player and the coach. If that player throws or abuses equipment again, the player will be ejected from the game.

Players on the team at bat may not attempt, in any way, to distract or upset the opposing pitcher. If any member of the offensive team engages in such unsportsmanlike conduct, the umpire shall issue a team warning. A second occurrence, by any member of the offensive team, shall result in the batter being called out.

If a player or coach is disrespectful or verbally abuses an umpire, the individual may be ejected from the game without warning and directed to leave the park immediately. The umpire has the discretion to issue one warning for disrespectful behavior. If the behavior does not stop immediately or reoccurs at any time, the coach or player will be ejected from the game and asked to leave the park.

If a spectator verbally abuses an umpire, the umpire will ask the coaches to join him in warning the individual(s) that if the abuse continues, the individual

will be asked to leave the park. In extreme cases, where such behavior continues, the umpire will direct that the game be forfeited.

The League holds its coaches and players to the highest standards of conduct and sportsmanship. If a coach or player demonstrates an unwillingness to meet those standards, the incident should be reported to the League Commissioner who will determine if further disciplinary action is warranted up to and including removal from the League.

Coaches, players and spectators are expected to conduct themselves with the highest level of sportsmanship at all Mt. Airy Baseball events. Improper behavior includes, but is not limited to, verbal, physical and non-verbal taunting of any player, coach or umpire. It also includes the use of noisemakers, musical instruments, bells, whistles, horns, or any amplified sound.

There is to be no harassment of any kind directed to a pitcher, batter, or fielder, from the player's team or bench.

The head coach is responsible for compliance by spectators, players, and any assistant coaches. Compliance is solely in the judgment of the umpire. Non-compliance will result in an umpire-issued warning to the coach. Coaches will be instructed to remind spectators, players and coaches of the rule and the consequences for non-compliance.

If the behavior continues a second non-compliance will result in the ejection of the head coach. If an assistant coach is not available, the game will be forfeited. A third incident of non-compliance will also result in the game being forfeited.

4. Spectator safety

The open areas next to and around the dugouts should be occupied only by players, the head coach, designated assistant coaches, and the scorekeeper for each team. In the interest of safety and to minimize distractions, parents and others are not permitted to watch the game next to or behind the backstop. Spectators are also not permitted to watch the game next to or behind the dugouts. These areas should be kept clear to serve as an on-deck area for players to warm up for hitting or pitching as needed. No one is to swing a bat or throw a ball without coaching supervision.

The dugout area is for players and coaches only. Friends, relatives, and others are not permitted to watch the game from the dugout area. Any spectator not observing these boundaries will be asked to move to the stands to safely watch the game.

PLAYOFFS

ALL LEAGUES

- Teams are seeded based on regular season records. Teams will receive two points for a win and one point for a tie in determining standings and seedings. In the event an uneven number of games is played, points will be calculated on a points per game played basis.
- If a tiebreaker is necessary. The first tiebreaker will be head-to-head competition. The second tiebreaker (if necessary) will be fewest runs allowed and the third tiebreaker (if necessary) will be most runs scored.
- The higher seeded team in each game is the home team.
- All regular season rules are in effect except as noted below.
- All playoff games will be played for the full 6 innings, although normal mercy rules will apply. If tied after 6 innings, extra innings will be played until the game is decided.
- Playoff schedule is subject to change due to weather or other unforeseen reasons.
- A game suspended due to weather or darkness before six innings or with the score tied will be resumed from the point the game was stopped.

MAJORS

- The tournament is double elimination. The team with fewer than two losses is the winner.
- Regular season rules regarding pitching apply in the playoffs.

AAA

- The tournament is single elimination.
- Regular season rules regarding pitching apply in the playoffs.

AA

- All regular season rules are in effect.
- The tournament is single elimination.
- The schedule is subject to change based on the weather. Rained out games will be rescheduled as quickly as possible. AAA and Major League Playoff games will receive priority in rescheduling.

PRACTICE ORGANIZATION

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To run a good practice takes preparation - mostly at the beginning of the season. But coaches need not look at this as a chore. It can be as much fun for you as it is for the players.

A number of coaching resources are available at this link:

<https://sites.google.com/view/mtairybaseballguide/home>

The internet, of course, is also filled with ideas for age-appropriate baseball drills. Many sources can be found at the above link.

Please keep in mind the following general tips:

- Plan your practice ahead of time. Write it down.
- Plan for an age-appropriate length of practice. 45 minutes to an hour can be plenty for 7 and 8-year-olds at the AA level. Players in Majors can handle a longer practice of 1:15 to 1:30.
- Incorporate a dynamic warmup at the start of practice.
- Use 10–15-minute stations, each led by a coach or assistant, to break players into smaller groups and maximize player reps.
- Minimize practice situations where 9 players are standing around or waiting in the field and one player is at bat. Keep each player engaged, especially at younger ages.
- Make drills into a game to keep it fun—award points for doing steps of the drill well, or structure the drill as a competition between players or teams of players.
- Incorporate hitting into your practices—you can use whiffle balls, heavy balls, or nets to practice hitting in a smaller area without taking over the entire field.
- Especially at the younger ages, train each player for every position.