

Thumb Area Baseball League: 12U Boys Rules – 2024

Good Sportsmanship is required from all coaches, players, parents, and fans. The emphasis of the Thumb Area Baseball League is to ensure all players have a good experience and learn the game of baseball.

General Rules

1. Eligibility for 12U BB - players must not be older than 12 years old **prior** to May 1st of the current year.
2. MHSAA rules will be followed with the exceptions of these listed.
3. Each team must have 7 players to start a game. Late arriving players will be added to the bottom of the lineup.
4. Player Pool - If your team is going to be short players (less than nine), you can add up to three, 12U Pool Players for a maximum team size of 9 players total. Pool Players must not be older than 12U, must be rostered on a team in the thumb league and from your town. Pool players can come from a 10U, 12U or 14U team as long as they are not older than 12U. A Pool player should be an average player and certainly not a player that also plays in an advanced program (except if from a younger division). The intent of the Player Pool is to fill a team - not to stack a team – we are expecting coaches to use good judgement and sportsmanship accordingly. A pool player must be reported as such to the other team, cannot pitch or catch and must bat at the bottom of the order. Pool players are not to be included on your team's official roster listed within Tourney Machine – only the regular players assigned to your team. Coaches are encouraged to use a different pool player from game to game if possible. Pool players will not be allowed during the end of season tournament.
5. Good Sportsmanship will be used at all times. The Umpire has the discretion to remove any player, parent, or coach if behavior is unsportsmanlike. At the conclusion of every game, teams must line up and shake hands - this is mandatory, no exceptions.
6. Bases will be set at 70' and 50' pitcher's mound.
7. The home team will occupy the 3rd base dugout and will keep the official book. Both team's books must be signed by umpires for league standings.
8. **The WINNING team will report the scores to the league within 24 hours or the game will be considered a forfeit for both teams (score = 0 to 0). Please include your age group and gender.**
9. Maximum run differential to be recorded is 10 runs (maximum winning score to be recorded = losing score plus 10).
10. If a team forfeits, the score shall be recorded as 0 to 10.

Uniforms and Equipment

1. There will be no bat restrictions at this age level. Bats should be stamped 1.15 or USA- Wooden bats are allowed no softball bats.
2. Metal cleats are prohibited. Players may not wear jewelry. Long pants must be worn.
3. All offensive players inside of the playing field fence need to wear a helmet. If the helmet is removed before leaving the playing field, a warning will be issued. Failure to comply a second time and an out will be called against that team. Repeated warnings may result in the player being removed from the game.

Game Length Rules

1. It is up to the home team representative to cancel a game, contact the opponent, and the league to reschedule.
2. Games will consist of 6 innings. At least 3 innings must be played to complete a game in case of rain or darkness. If less than 3 innings, the game needs to be rescheduled for a later date. All makeup games need to be scheduled through the league. Makeup games start over at the top of the 1st inning.
3. Umpires will establish the official start time of each game with coaches and scorekeepers from both teams. The umpire will set a game timer that will be set for 75 minutes. Once the 75 minutes is reached, the inning currently in will be finished. The umpire will call last inning and each team will have the opportunity to bat one more time. When the last inning is called it is unlimited runs and 3 outs are needed to end play. If the game reaches the sixth inning prior to the 75 minutes, the sixth inning becomes last inning.
4. There will be a maximum of 8 runs scored per inning or 3 outs required to end an inning (except last inning is unlimited runs) Mercy rule comes into effect if a team is leading by 15 runs after 4 and 10 runs after 5 completed innings. Mercy rule does not apply in last inning.

5. When the game ends in a tie, the International Tie Breaker Rule will be in effect. The extra inning will begin with a base runner on second base. That base runner will be the player who made the last out in the previous inning. Both teams will use this tie breaker until the game ends with a team winning.

Pitching

1. Pitchers will be limited to pitching 3 innings per game maximum. Innings pitched need to be consecutive. One pitch constitutes an inning pitched.
2. We will be using Pitch Count for pitchers. A breakdown of days rest to pitches thrown is below. Every coach will need to login to tourney machine and list the pitcher and their pitches thrown before their next game. A team getting caught cheating this rule may be subject to a forfeit of the game. A pitcher may finish the hitter they are on if they cross the pitching threshold and revert back to the days rest from before they started that batter. Example a pitcher starts an at bat with 21 pitches and he finishes the at bat with 27 pitches and is pulled before the next hitter it would constitute 25 pitches or less and they would need zero days' rest.

25 or less pitches = No Days Rest

26-50 pitches = 1 day of rest

51-75 pitches = 2 days of rest

1. Only 2 defensive conferences will be allowed per inning. If a coach makes a 2nd visit to the mound in the same inning, for the same pitcher, that pitcher must be replaced at that time.
2. If a pitcher hits 4 batters during a game, that pitcher is not to pitch for the remainder of the game.
3. Balks will be called; however, each pitcher will receive one warning before being penalized. If there are no runners on base when a balk is called, a "Ball" will be called for that pitch.
4. Warm up pitches: New Pitcher to an inning: 6 pitches, Pitcher returning in consecutive innings: 4 warm-up pitches. Mask and Helmet must be worn by any player warming a pitcher up anywhere in the park.
5. When on Defense, coaches must stay in their dugouts unless to have a defensive conference or to address the umpire, in which "time" must be called to do so.

Batting

1. All teams will use a rotational batting order for all players present (all players present and able, must bat). This batting order will remain the same throughout the game except that late arriving players will be added to the bottom of the batting order. If a team has less than a full batting order, an out shall **not** be recorded for the missing batter(s).
2. If a player is injured and cannot bat, the player shall be skipped and an out shall not be recorded. However, once a player is skipped in the batting order due to an injury, the player shall then be removed from the rest of the game.
3. Home Plate is fair territory. A batted ball that hits or settles on home plate is a fair ball.
4. Throwing bats is prohibited. Teams are given one warning per game. Any offense after that will result in an out.
5. Infield Fly Rule may be enforced on a fair fly ball, if there are runners on first and second, or bases are loaded with less than two outs. The batter is called out and the runners stay at their base.
6. **Drop Third Strike Rule:** On an uncaught third strike with no runner on first base or with two outs, the batter immediately becomes a runner. The batter may then attempt to reach first base and must be tagged or thrown out. If at the time of the strike three pitch, first base is occupied with fewer than two outs, the batter is automatically out and cannot become a runner. If two outs, the dropped third strike is always live even if first base is occupied, runners should be moving.
7. On-deck batter shall use on-deck circle on same side as batter.

Base Running

1. Runners may lead-off.
2. Stealing of any base is allowed, including home.
3. Close plays at any base (except 1st) require that the runner slide. The umpire may call the runner out if they feel a slide was warranted.
4. A courtesy runner will be allowed for the catcher when he is on base with two outs. The courtesy runner used must have been the last player out. If a player is injured, the player who made the last out will be the substitution runner, as well.

Fielding

1. Teams will use 9 players when on defense, with free substitutions at the beginning of every half inning. Players have to play on defense a minimum of two innings.
2. Each coach will be responsible for their team hustling on and off the field between innings. This includes getting your catcher ready ahead of time if he is not batting.