

Winfield in Action (WIA) Official Baseball Rules

The scope of this document is intended to be a guide for the WIA Board of Directors, Baseball Commissioner, League Directors and all of the Volunteer Coaches.

The purpose of forming and administering this baseball program by WIA, is for the instructional betterment of the players involved and to provide an environment where these players can learn and have fun, by playing the game of baseball.

Divisions:

There are seven (8) leagues within the WIA baseball program, they are as follows:

- T-Ball 4 & 5 year old coed
- Junior 6 & 7 year old coed
- Pre-Minor 8 year old boys
- Minor 9 & 10 year old boys
- Major 11 & 12 year old boys
- Pony 13 year old boys (National League)
 14 year old boys (American League)
- Colt 15 & 16 year old boys
- Palomino 17 & 18 year old boys

Pre-Minor:

This league is structured similarly to the Juniors league, as an instructional league. It is intended to build upon the skills learned at the Juniors league, where fundamental skills are the most important part of the game. No scores are to be kept during these games, as it is not part of the philosophy of this league. The added skills introduced at this level are both pitching and hitting a ball thrown by a peer. Player requests will be used in the formation of the teams and will be met to the best of the league's capabilities. Overriding factor will be ratings from the prior year & team size (number of players on a team).

Skills The Coaches Are Expected To Teach:

- Proper technique for hitting a pitched ball
- Batters identifying whether a pitched ball is a strike or a ball
- Continue to stress the proper release of the bat after hitting the ball
- Learning to watch their 1st base coach for advancement on a hit ball (running through 1st base for a single or rounding 1st to look for additional bases)
- The proper technique to slide into a base safely to avoid a tag (collision)
- Being in the ready position when playing in the infield & outfield
- Technique of throwing a ball into 2nd base from the outfield
- Introduce the Cutoff
 - How to throw to the cutoff
 - How to receive a cutoff throw
- How to execute a run down play (pickle)
- Developing pitching in this league is very important. All players should be run through the pitching workouts for your team. It is best to have the players pitch from the stretch position and have them concentrate on getting the ball over the plate.

Field Requirements & Equipment:

- Bases are to be 50' away from each other
- Pitching mound is to be 40' away from home plate
- Uniforms (pants, shirt & hat) are supplied by WIA
- Baseballs, bats, batting helmet, batting tee & catchers gear are supplied by WIA
- No metal spikes are allowed
- Players must wear protective cups
- Players can use their own bats, but they must be Aluminum
 - Can not be longer than 28" & not have a barrel larger than 2 ¼" in diameter
- All batting helmets must have facemasks

The Game:

- This league does allow for make up games, but it is not mandatory. Contact the league director to check for field availability.
- If one team has less than eight (8) players, then the other team will rotate player(s) per inning to the other team, to get them to eight (8), so that the game can be played.
- Games are four (4) innings in length and have a maximum duration of 2 hours.
- No score or standings will be kept
- Pitching:
 - The batting teams coach pitches in the 1st and 3rd innings up to a maximum of three (3) swings & misses or eight (8) pitches per batter, if the batter can not hit the ball by those limits, then the batting tee should be brought out for the batter. There are no called balls or strikes when the coach is pitching.
 - A player from the fielding team will pitch in the 2nd and 4th innings and the normal 4 ball / 3 strike count will be used. If a batter reaches 4 balls, the batting teams coach will throw an additional 4 pitches. At that time the count on the batter will be reset to a 1 ball / 1 strike. If the batter reaches 4 balls, the batter will be awarded a walk, if a batter reaches 3 strikes, then the batter will be retired as an out. A foul ball must go over the batters head to be caught for an out, except on the 3rd strike, where any fouled ball can be caught for the out.
 - A player is only allowed to "Start" one (1) inning per week, but they can pitch a total of three (3) innings per week, so they could come in relief for the two additional innings.
 - One (1) pitch thrown in an inning will be counted as an inning pitched.
 - The week begins on Sunday and ends on Saturday.
 - A pitcher must automatically be replaced after they "Hit" three (3) batters or "Walk" six (6) batters.
 - A time out called for a second conference with a pitcher during an inning automatically requires a change of pitchers.
- There is a continuous batting order.
- **If a player throws their bat, a team warning will be given. On the next thrown bat from that player, the player will be called out and all runners will return to their original bases.**
- Batting orders are established before the first game of the season and remain the same for the first five (5) games of the season. The player who follows the batter, that made the last out of the previous game, will be the first batter of the next game. From the sixth

game on, a manager can establish a batting order for each game, but they must keep track of the number of “at bats” per player and equalize them for the entire season.

- The maximum number of batters per inning is nine (9). So an inning will end when the fielding team gets three (3) outs or the maximum number of nine (9) players has batted.
- Players can only advance one base on an overthrow at their own risk. No advancement to home will be awarded.
- Players cannot steal. A base runners foot must be in contact with the base when the ball is hit.
- On the ninth (9) batter of an inning, the base runners can advance until the fielding team gets the ball into the catcher or gets an out.
- The fielding team will only have nine (9) players in the field.
- A player may only sit out one (1) inning per game, if they are available to play. The manager should keep track of who sits out each game, so that they can equalize this for every player over the entire season.
- Fielders must rotate the position they play each inning, so that they get the opportunity to play all positions. Coaches should keep track of positions played, so that players get equal chances at all positions.
 - The manager should use discretion on whether a player is ready to play in any particular position. If a player desires to play a position that they need work on, then the manager should go over drills that the player needs to perform, with help from their parents or friends, to improve their skill level.
- To keep the game moving, the batting team should have their catcher putting on their gear before the inning is over, so that the game can keep moving.
 - Catching is also a skill that managers need to develop. When warming up pitchers, catchers must wear protective gear. If protective gear is not available the catcher must wear a helmet, mask and should not be in the squat position. Make sure that this gear fits the catcher correctly.
- When your team is playing the field, you should not have any coaches in the field of play. If you have a player with special needs on your team you may chose to assist them as required, but try and keep this to a minimum.

Calls & Miscellaneous:

- In the 1st and 3rd innings, the team that is batting will have a coach pitching and additional coaches at 1st & 3rd bases. The coach that is pitching should be aware of the need to protect the player who is fielding the pitchers position and knock down any ball that may cause a problem.
 - The coach that is pitching will have the responsibility to act as the lead umpire and call fair & foul balls plus the plays at the bases. They can solicit help from the coaches at 1st & 3rd base or the coach from the other team. Remember, this level is about instruction and not winning, make your calls loud and clear and explain them to the players so that they learn the rules.
- In the 2nd and 4th innings, the team that is fielding will have a coach standing behind their pitcher, both giving them instructions and calling balls and strikes.
 - This coach will have the responsibility to act as the lead umpire and call fair & foul balls plus the plays at the bases. They can solicit help from the coaches at 1st & 3rd base from the other team. Remember, this level is about instruction and not winning, make your calls loud and clear and explain them to the players so that they learn the rules.

- The strike zone will be called from the batters knees to their armpits and from just inside and outside of the plate. Describe this to the batters before each game by placing a baseball touching the ground and plate at the same time. Be consistent on your strike zone to help the batters get used to recognizing it.
- The home team is responsible for the game ball. After the game is over add it to your practice balls, please do not hand it out as WIA counts on these balls as practice balls for the next season.
- During weeknight games the visiting team has the field ½ an hour before the start of the game and the home team has the field ¼ of an hour before the start of the game. On Saturdays this may only be possible for the first game of the day. Please start all games on time, so that everyone gets use of the fields.
- No negative comments are allowed from the fielding players towards the batters such as “miss it” or “swing”.
- The home team manager for the game will make sure that all equipment from the field equipment box is returned to it and that it is locked before leaving, unless there are teams present to play the next game.
- A team Manager is responsible for the conduct of themselves, their players and the player’s parents. Teaching good sportsmanship continues at this level for all concerned.