



Youth Baseball Rules and Regulations - 2023

The purpose of Youth Recreational Athletic Leagues is to provide an enjoyable organized experience under capable adult supervision for youth in Botetourt County. The program is organized to promote sportsmanship, cooperation, and fair play at all times while developing knowledge and skills of the game.

The Botetourt County Youth Baseball leagues are governed by **Little League International** and will apply except as modified herein.

Any team participating in leagues outside Botetourt County will be required to adhere to that area's rules and regulations

Age Classification: Playing age is the age attained by a player on or before August 31st of the current school year.

League	Ages	Roster Size	Playing Field	Ball Used	Bats Used
Tee Ball (No score kept)	5-6	Min- 7 Max- 9	Bases- 50' Toe Plate- 46'	Official Tee Ball Or RIF Level 1	Length of 26" or under and Tee Ball Approved
Coach Pitch (No score kept)	7-8	Min- 10 Max- 12	Bases- 60' Toe Plate- 35'	RIF Level 5	Length of 33" or under and no greater than 2 5/8" Barrel
Minor League	9-10	Min- 10 Max- 12	Bases- 60' Toe Plate- 46'	Official Baseball	Length of 33" or under and no greater than 2 5/8" Barrel
Major League	11-12	Min- 10 Max- 12	Bases- 60' Toe Plate- 46'	Official baseball	Length of 33" or under and no greater than 2 5/8" Barrel
Junior League	13-14	Min- 10 Max- 14	Bases -90' Toe Plate – 60ft 6 inches	Official Baseball	Length of 34" or under and no greater than 2 5/8 Barrel
Senior League	15-16	Min- 10 Max- 14	Bases -90' Toe Plate – 60ft 6 inches	Official Baseball	Length of 36" or under and no greater than 2 5/8 Barrel

I. **Player Eligibility**

- A. A child must play for the booster club that represents the elementary school district in which they live or school they attend. The Recreation department reserves the right to move a player to a different booster club based on registration numbers.
- B. Players wishing to play when their club is not fielding a team may choose to play for the nearest club that is fielding a team in that league.
- C. All players must be registered with the recreation department before he or she is allowed to practice or play in a game.
- D. Players must be a Botetourt County resident or attend a Botetourt County public school to be eligible to participate in any Botetourt County athletic league. If a player moves out of the county, they may continue to participate in the program until they age out, as long as their participation is continuous in that specific sport with no breaks between the age classifications.

II. **Team Rosters**

- A. Rosters sizes are listed above to allow teams to adhere to rules here in.
- B. Any booster club fielding more than one team ages 9 and up must place players on teams by using the drafting procedures.
- C. Transfer of players during the season is prohibited, **although teams may borrow players to field the minimum number to play a game, contingent to borrow player rule.**
- D. Coaches must consent to a background screening and be cleared to coach before he or she is allowed to coach a team during a practice or game.
 - 1. Coaches are required to carry their department issued coaching badge at all team events including games and practices.
- E. Only four (4) coaches allowed for tee ball and coach pitch. Three coaches (3) allowed for all other age groups.
- F. Any coach found to be using an ineligible player may be suspended from coaching for a period of one year. The suspension is applicable to any and all sports from the date formal action was taken.

III. **League Rules**

- A. Practices may begin mid-March and games may begin in April.
- B. A maximum 3 hours of practice sessions may be held in a week.
- C. A week starts on Monday and ends on Sunday.
- D. After games begin, a maximum of three (3) mandatory events may be held in a week (including games), at no more than two hours per session.
 - 1. Exception: A double-header will only count as one event notwithstanding the session time limit
- E. Two umpires will be assigned per game for Minors and above. One umpire will be assigned per game for coach pitch games. No umpires will be assigned for Tee Ball games.
 - 1. No team shall have the right to refuse an umpire.
 - 2. One umpire shall be sufficient to play a Minors or Majors league game.
- F. Umpires are authorized and required to enforce all rules and may order a player, coach or spectator to refrain from interfering with the umpire's ability to administer these rules. The umpire has the authority to eject any player, coach or spectator from participating or observing the game, for objecting to calls, using abusive language, improper gestures, or physical contact, or other unsportsmanlike conduct not specifically listed in these rules.
- G. Each team must supply a scorekeeper for each game (Minor divisions and above). The home team will keep the official scorebook. The scorekeepers should confer with each

- other at the end of each inning to be sure the score is correct and proper substitutions are being made. Scorekeepers should sign each scorebook at the end of the game.
- H. Each team must submit a lineup card with players' names to each scorekeeper ten minutes before scheduled start time. This **full roster-batting lineup** will be used for the entire game. If a player is unable to finish the game, that position in the lineup will be skipped.
 - I. All players in attendance must play a minimum of 6 complete outs on defense within the first four innings.
 - J. If any player is benched for disciplinary reasons, the opposing coach and the official scorekeeper must be notified prior to the start of the game.
 - K. A team must have six (6) players to play a game in Tee Ball and Coach Pitch. All other age groups must have seven (7) players to play a game.
 - 1. Tee Ball and Coach Pitch: If a team does not have the minimum number of players for a game, they shall borrow players from the opposing team until they have enough players to meet the minimum requirement
 - 2. Ages 9 & Up: If a team does not have the minimum number of players for a game, the game is forfeited (after the duration of the waiting period). Once a forfeit is declared, teams should make every effort to organize a scrimmage and the score of that will not count.
 - 3. No team may borrow players from a team other than that which they are scheduled to play against in that game
 - 4. No team may borrow players from other age groups or who are not registered for the Botetourt County League
 - L. Teams will be given ten (10) minutes after the scheduled start time to produce the minimum number of players to begin the game. The 10-minute waiting period counts towards time limit.
 - M. The team scheduled to be the home team (regardless of the location where the game is played) is required to provide the game ball. Game balls will be provided for each team by the Parks & Recreation department at the beginning of the season. Teams must use the game balls provided by the department and contact the department to obtain more if necessary.
 - N. Each team must be supervised by a certified/background screened Parks and Recreation coach of at least 18 years of age at all times during practice and games.
 - O. Leagues will be scheduled for the following number of games:
 - 1. Tee Ball: 8 scheduled games (guaranteed 6)
 - 2. Coach Pitch: 10 scheduled games (guaranteed 8)
 - 3. Minor, Major, Junior, and Senior Leagues: guaranteed 12 games
 - P. Botetourt County Parks and Recreation will handle all official makeup games.
 - 1. Teams should notify Parks and Recreation of an impending forfeit or known cancelled game so that umpires and field set-up can be cancelled in advance.
 - 2. Cancelled games may not be rescheduled unless a team falls below the guaranteed number of games
 - Q. Any game called early because of inclement weather or other act of God will be considered a complete game when:
 - 1. Tee Ball/Machine Pitch - when both teams have batted two times.
 - 2. All other age groups - when both teams have batted four times, or three times when the home team is leading.
 - 3. Tie games are allowed in all divisions where a score is kept, providing both teams have batted an equal number of times and the minimum number of innings has been played, or the time limit has been met
 - 4. Games not meeting the above requirements will not be considered an official contest and will not count towards either teams win/loss record.
 - R. Game cancellation information can be obtained by calling 992-0012 after 4:00pm on weekdays and 7:30am on Saturdays.

IV. **Game Play - Tee Ball**

A. General

1. No score will be kept.
2. Maximum length of games will be one hour and 30 minutes or 4 innings.
3. No infield fly rule.
4. No tagging up - On a caught pop fly, runners may not advance and will be returned to occupied base with no penalty.
5. No bunting.
6. No base stealing.
7. 50-foot base lengths.
8. T-Ball bats and balls must be officially stamped approved for Tee Ball use only.
9. Play will be considered dead when any defensive player has control of the ball within the 8' radius circle that surrounds the pitching rubber.
10. Hash marks shall be placed half way between each base. If the runner is past the hash mark when the ball becomes dead, the runner must advance to next base. If runner is not yet past the hash mark, the runner must return to previous base.
11. Putouts do not count as outs for the purpose of retiring a side.
12. Prior to each game, the coaches should determine if putouts will remove the runner from the perspective play.
13. An inning will end when the last offensive player has batted and the ball is caught on a fly or a defensive player touches home plate while possessing the batted ball.

B. Batting/Base Running

1. Every child in attendance must be listed on initial lineup. Each team will bat 8 batters each inning. If a team has less than eight they will continue through their batting list until 8 batters per inning is reached.
2. A ball is considered fair once the batter strikes the ball from the tee causing it to travel forward within the playing area and beyond the 25-foot radius from home plate.
3. A ball not traveling past the 25-foot radius shall be called a foul ball.
4. A defensive player that touches the ball before traveling beyond the 25-foot radius shall immediately cause the ball to become foul.

C. Defense

1. A maximum of 8 defensive players shall be allowed on the field at a time. Positions should consist of a pitcher, catcher (optional), first base, second base, third base, shortstop, and outfielders. Outfielders should be placed at least five feet beyond bases and base paths.
2. The pitcher must keep at least one foot on the pitching rubber until the ball is hit.

D. Coaches Participation

1. Coaches are allowed on the field for the purpose of placing the ball on the tee, serving as a defensive coach on the infield and offensively as a base coach from the coaching box.
2. A maximum of two coaches per team are allowed on the field at one time.
3. At no time can a coach physically assist a fielder or runner in their actions.
4. The coach of the team at bat will be responsible for adjusting the tee for each batter and placing the ball on the tee.
5. The coach shall remove the tee from home plate once the ball is put into play and will return the tee for the next batter after the ball has been declared dead.

V. **Game Play - Coach Pitch**

A. General

1. No score will be kept.
2. Maximum length of games will be one hour and 30 minutes or 5 innings.

3. No infield fly.
 4. No tagging up – On a caught pop fly, runners may not advance and will be returned to occupied base with no penalty.
 5. No bunting.
 6. No base stealing.
 7. 60-foot base lengths.
 8. All games will be coach pitch.
 9. Coach Pitch balls must be RIF Level 5 or equivalent. Bats may not exceed 33" in length and barrels may not exceed 2 5/8" in diameter.
 10. Coaches can pitch anywhere from inside the 8' radius circle
 11. Coaches must pitch with an overhand motion
 12. Play will be considered dead when any defensive player has control of the ball within the 8' radius circle that surrounds the pitching rubber.
 13. Hash marks shall be placed half way between each base. If the runner is past the hash mark when the ball becomes dead, the runner must advance to next base. If runner is not yet past the hash mark, the runner must return to previous base.
 14. Putouts count as outs for the purpose of retiring a side and will remove the runner from the respective play.
 15. An inning will end when the defensive team makes three outs or after the ninth offensive player in an inning has batted and the ball is declared dead.
- B. Batting/Base Running
1. Every child in attendance must be listed on the initial lineup. Up to nine players may bat each inning or three outs whichever comes first.
 2. Any player throwing a bat is automatically considered out.
 3. A ball is considered fair once the batter strikes the ball with the bat causing it to travel forward within the playing area and beyond the 25-foot radius from home plate.
 4. A ball not traveling past the 25-foot radius shall be called a foul ball.
 5. A defensive player that touches the ball before traveling beyond the 25-foot radius shall immediately cause the ball to become foul.
 6. Each batter will be allowed three swings or five total pitches. If after five pitches, a batter has not hit the ball in play, the batter will be declared out. If on the fifth pitch the batter fouls the ball off, the batter will receive additional pitches until an acceptable play results.
 7. There are no base on balls (walks) or hit by pitch advancements.
- C. Defensive
1. A maximum of 9 defensive players are allowed on the field at a time. Positions should consist of a pitcher, catcher, first base, second base, third base, shortstop and three outfielders. Outfielders should be placed at least five feet beyond bases and base paths.
 2. Each player is required to play at least two complete innings (6 outs) on defense within the first four innings.
 3. The catcher must wear all required catcher's safety equipment (including a cup).
 4. The player/pitcher is required to stand with both feet inside the 8' radius circle, even with or behind of the pitcher's plate. Player/pitcher does not have to be in contact with the pitching rubber.
- D. Coaches Participation
1. One coach will be allowed on the field to assist as defensive fielding coach.
 2. One coach is allowed in the home plate area to ensure the batter is properly positioned in the batter's box.
 3. At no time can a coach physically assist a fielder or runner in their actions.
 4. The coach/pitcher must make every effort to avoid interfering with any ball put into play by either being hit by the batter or thrown by a defensive player.
 5. If a batted ball makes contact with the coach pitcher, it will be considered a foul

- ball.
6. A coach should use discretion when receiving the ball from the catcher after a pitch and allow the player-pitcher to receive the ball from the catcher as much as possible.

VI. **Game Play - Minor League**

A. General

1. Maximum length of games will be one hour and 30 minutes or 6 innings. No new inning should be started after 1 hour and 20 minutes.
2. Infield fly will be in effect.
3. Play will be considered dead when the Umpire calls TIME and play is complete.
4. 60-foot base lengths.
5. 46-foot pitching distance.
6. Mercy rule, 10 runs after 5.

B. Batting/Base Running

1. Every child in attendance must be listed on the initial lineup. Up to nine players may bat each inning or three outs, whichever comes first.
2. If the ninth batter walks, is hit by pitch, or catcher interference, all base runners, whether forced or not, shall advance two (2) bases.
 - The 2 base award is in place of any forced advancement from the walk, not in addition to it.
 - Example: A runner on first when the 9th batter of the inning is walked ends on 3rd base. A runner on 2nd base when the 9th batter of the inning is walked will score.
3. Bunts are allowed. NO fake bunting allowed.
4. Batter may not run on dropped third strike.
5. Base stealing permitted once ball crosses plate. Runners must keep in contact with base until ball crosses the plate.
 - Stealing is not permitted when a coach is pitching.
6. Bat recommendation is 2 ¼ diameter, although 2 5/8 diameter bats will be allowed with the USA Baseball Stamp. All bats must have USA baseball stamp.
7. Dropped third strike by catcher, batter is out. Runners advance at their own risk.
8. Head first slides are not permitted and runner will be called out.
 - Head first dives back to a base during a pick-off attempt are permitted

C. Defense

1. A maximum of 9 defensive players are allowed on the field at a time.
2. Each player is required to play at least two complete innings (6 outs) on defense within first four innings.

D. Pitching

1. Pitch count and pitcher rest requirements are found on pages 60-64 of the little league rule book.
2. Each team is required to keep the pitch count for each pitcher in a game and carry this with them to each game showing who pitched in previous games.
3. After three (3) total walks per inning, the current pitcher must be displaced from the act of pitching but will remain in the pitcher's position and the batting teams coach will finish the team's turn at bat by pitching to his/her own team. The coach pitcher must pitch from a standing position, delivering the ball in an overhand motion. The coach will throw up to five pitches until either an out or hit is recorded. If the fifth pitch or each subsequent pitch is fouled off, another pitch will be given. This may take place until allowed innings per game are met. This rule is in place to keep the game moving.
4. The pitcher must be removed after hitting three batters in one game.
5. No balks.

All other rules are governed by Little League Baseball Rule Book

VII. Game Play - Major League

A. General

1. Maximum length of games will be one hour and 45 minutes or 6 innings. No new inning should be started after 1 hour and 45 minutes.
2. Infield fly will be in effect.
3. 60-foot base lengths.
4. 46-foot pitching distance.
5. Mercy rule, 10 runs after 5.

B. Batting/Base Running

1. Every child in attendance must be listed on the initial lineup.
2. Bunts are allowed. NO fake bunting allowed.
3. Batter may run on third strike, if ball is not caught by catcher and providing less than two outs and first base is not occupied, or first base is occupied with two outs.
4. Base stealing permitted once BALL crosses plate. Runners must keep in contact with base until ball crosses the plate. Bat recommendation is 2 ¼ diameter, although 2 5/8 diameter bats with will be allowed with the USA Baseball Stamp. All bats must have USA baseball stamp.
5. Head first slides are not permitted and runner will be called out.
 - Head first dives back to a base during a pick-off attempt are permitted

C. Defense

1. A maximum of 9 defensive players are allowed on the field at a time.
2. Each player is required to play at least two complete innings (6 outs) on defense within first four innings.

D. Pitching

1. Pitch count and pitcher rest requirements are found on page 60-64 of the little league rule book.
2. Each team is required to keep the pitch count for each pitcher in a game and carry this with them to each game showing who pitched in previous games.
3. The pitcher must be removed after hitting three batters in one game.
4. No Balks

VIII. Game Play – Junior/Senior League

A. General

1. Maximum length of games will be one hour and 45 minutes or 7 innings. No new inning should be started after 1 hour and 45 minutes.
2. Infield fly will be in effect.
3. 90-foot base lengths.
4. 60feet 6 inches-foot pitching distance.
5. Mercy rule, 10 runs after 5.

B. Batting/Base Running

1. Every child in attendance must be listed on the initial lineup.
2. Bunts are allowed.
3. Batter may run on third strike, if ball is not caught by catcher and providing less than two outs and first base is not occupied, or first base is occupied with two outs.
4. Base stealing and lead offs are permitted.
5. Bats can be up to 2 5/8 diameter and will be allowed with the USA Baseball Stamp. All bats must have USA baseball stamp.

C. Defense

1. A maximum of 9 defensive players are allowed on the field at a time.
2. Each player is required to play at least two complete innings (6 outs) on defense

within first four innings.

D. Pitching

1. Pitch count and pitcher rest requirements are found on page 59 of the little league rule book.
2. Each team is required to keep the pitch count for each pitcher in a game and carry this with them to each game showing who pitched in previous games.
3. The pitcher must be removed after hitting three batters in one game.
4. Balks will be called

IX. Score Reporting – Minor, Major, Junior, and Senior Leagues

1. Both teams must submit the final score and up to 3 all star nominations via email to recreation@botetourtva.gov no later than 10:00AM the following morning after your game. For consistency purposes, please send the score in the following format:

Age Division/League: 9 & 10 Softball

Date: Saturday 5/8/23

Time: 12:00PM

Location: Troutville Field #1

Home: Troutville – head coach last name 10

Away: Cloverdale – head coach last name - 11

All Star Nominations:

1. #7 – John Doe
- 2.
- 3.

All other rules are governed by Little League Baseball Rule Book