

Marysville Junior Baseball & Softball Association (MJBSA)

8U Minor League Baseball Rules

(Rev. Dec 2022)

NOTE: Any rules listed in **italicized/red text**, indicate changes or clarifications from the previous season.

Age Qualifications

- The 8U Minor League is open to boys or girls who are between the ages of 7-8 as of January 1st of the current registration year.

Field Dimensions

- Pitching rubber: 46 feet from the back of home plate
- Basepath: 60 feet
- Distance from home to 2nd base: 85 feet

Player Participation

- Each player in attendance of any game must play two continuous innings of defense and bat at least once.
- For the 8U Minor league, each defensive player will be required to play at least 2 complete innings at an infield position per game. Not enforced in tournament play.
- The entire roster will be the batting order. All batters must follow the batting order as established by the coach. If there are only eight players the ninth position will not be an out.
- If a player is placed on disciplinary restriction by the coach, notice must be given to the umpire staff and the opposing coach prior to the start of the game.
- The two inning participation rule can and should be waived in event of injury.
- Players who are not under restriction but not allowed to play innings due to a shortened game will start the next game and play the entire game.

Insufficient Number of Players

- A team may start and play with a minimum of 7 players in 8U Minor League without penalty. No outs will be given for absent batters. Catcher can be assigned to an outfield position if less than 9 players are present.
- Late arriving regular team players will be added to the end of the batting order in 8U Minor League.
- If a team has an insufficient number of players at game start time or after the game starts, no more than 15 minutes will be given to find eligible pick-up player(s). At the end of 15 minutes, the team short of players will automatically forfeit.
- If a base runner is injured on the field and cannot continue and player number drops below 10 for 8U Minor League, the player who made the last offensive out will pinch run for the injured runner.
- Teams are allowed to finish a game with 7 players in the event of an injury and there are no eligible pick-up players to be found. No outs will be issued if the injured player is due to bat.
- Pick-up players are permitted to be used throughout the regular season and tournaments as long as the following stipulations are met:
 - The opposing coach and the umpire are notified prior to the start of the game.
 - The pick-up player plays in an outfield position only.
 - The pick-up player bats last in the lineup.
 - Pick-up players must be from the league lower (ie: 8U Minor league must pick up players from the 6U Transitional league)
 - Pick-up players must be current members of the MJBSA or a participating association, in good standing.
 - Players that choose to "play up" as regular players on the roster of a MJBSA affiliated team in an older age league are ineligible to play as a pick-up player in the lower age group even though they are age eligible.
 - No more than (2) pick-up players can play per team, not to exceed a starting line-up. (ie: 8U Minor League can pick up two players to a maximum of 10 players)
 - Coaches do not have to play late arriving player(s), if the player(s) arrive after the 3rd inning has been completed.
 - Late arriving team player(s) that have been substituted by a pick-up player(s), must replace the pick-up player(s) upon arrival, unless the late arriving player(s) have already been suspended due to disciplinary action. All disciplinary actions must follow the guidelines as stated in Article IX; Formal Hearings of the MJBSA Constitution.

Equipment

- All batters must wear NOCSAE (National Operating Committee on Standards for Athletic Equipment) approved batting helmets with NOCSAE approved face guard. Batters must wear a batting helmet with approved face shield at all times when on the field of play (on-deck circle, batter's box, base paths, or any location where batting is taking place) during all MJBSA sanctioned practices or games. This protective equipment shall cover both ears and temples. It is illegal to wear any other headgear when batting or running while participating in MJBSA. Chins straps are mandatory and must be fastened at all times when wearing this protective equipment. A team warning will be issued to both teams for any MJBSA player not intentionally wearing specified protective head-gear on the first offense. Offending player must take corrective action immediately or player will be declared out after the play is over. Player will be declared out immediately on the second offense once the player enters the batter's box.
- Baseball cleats are restricted to rubber only.
- The home team will responsible for providing (2) new game balls, made of leather, at the start of each game. MJBSA will provide game balls which shall be issued the beginning of the season
- The pitching machine will be supplied by the HOME team.
- Each player must wear a baseball glove.
- Bats may be made of wood, aluminum, and other materials manufactured specifically for baseball play.
 - Bats used in the 8U Minor League shall not have a diameter greater than 2 5/8".
 - **Bats that meet "USA Baseball" standards are strongly recommended**



Figure 1 USA Baseball Stamp

- **USSSA Bats are not permitted**



Figure 2 USSSA Logo - Bats that have this stamp are not permitted

- **Any player that walks onto the field with the purpose of using a bat in a game that does not meet MJBSA requirements will be called out immediately.**
- Safety items. Both coaches and the umpire staff must be notified of all medical protective items prior to the start of the game. Prior release from the attending physician must be available for review.

Offense

- The entire team's roster is the batting order. All batters must follow the order established by the coach.
- There will be at least one umpire supplied for every game.
- There is no run rule, however a team can score no more than 7 runs per inning.
- The offensive side is retired after 3 defensive outs have been recorded.
- Bunting is not permitted.

Defense

- There will be 10 defensive players allowed on the field. They are to be positioned as follows:
 - 4 must be positioned in the outfield
 - 4 must be positioned in the infield
 - 1 must be positioned at the pitcher's mound
 - 1 must be positioned at the catcher's position
- There will be open substitutions.
- Defensive players in the infield, except the pitcher and catcher, must not be more than 5 feet in front of the baseline until the ball is hit.

- Throwing the ball to the circle does not guarantee a time out. Time outs will be awarded at the discretion of the umpire.
- The infield fly rule will not be enforced in 8U Minor league.

Pitching Machine (Louisville Slugger UPM 45 Blue Flame or Black Flame)

- In 2013, MJBSA enacted rules to require the 8U Minor League to begin utilizing a spring loaded pitching machine, the Louisville Slugger UPM 45 Blue Flame or Black Flame. These spring loaded pitching machines require cooperation between the coaches to ensure proper performance during the game. The goal of these machines are to provide a more consistent and accurate pitch, thus resulting in a more enjoyable and productive experience for the players.
- Coaches must read and understand the instruction manual included with the pitching machine or provided by the 8U Minor League Commissioner.
- Players, children under 18 years of age, and those who have not read the instruction manual are NOT permitted to use the pitching machines under ANY circumstances during MJBSA league practices, games or functions.
- All 8U teams will be using the pitching machine during official games. Coaches may pitch to the players, if and only if, the spring loaded pitching machine become inoperable during a game. The 8U Minor League Commissioner or Director of Baseball must be notified as soon as possible by the HOME team's coach to ensure that repairs and/or replacement of unit can be made in a timely manner.
- The machine will be supplied by the HOME team.
- The front stabilizer bar of the pitching machine will be placed 43' from the back of home plate.
- The range of settings of the pitching machines will be as follows: 3- Power Lever, 4 - Release Block, 3 - Micro Adjustment. Adjustments may be necessary throughout the season to accommodate spring usage and/or temperature. Once an inning begins, no other adjustments will be permitted except to calibrate wild pitches or with the micro-adjustment screw to adjust strike zone. All other adjustments must be agreed upon by both teams coaches and umpire and shall not take longer than 3 minutes.
- The batter will receive 5 pitches. If no hit occurs, the batter will be recorded as an out. Foul balls count towards the 5 pitch allowance. If the batter fouls off the fifth pitch, the batter will continue to receive pitches until one is missed or put in play. If the batter is hit on the 5th pitch, he/she will receive another pitch. If the machine produces a wild pitch or blatantly irregular pitch, by no fault of the coach, the umpire has the discretion to call "no pitch" and the pitch does not count towards the pitch count. The batter will be awarded an additional pitch. If multiple irregular pitches happen during the course of an inning, The pitching machine will then be cooperatively calibrated. This shall not exceed 3 minutes. Minor adjustments made with the micro-adjustment screw (1/2 turn increments) to the varying heights of 8U batters will be counted toward the 5 pitch allowance.
- A batted ball which makes obvious contact with the pitching machine or the coach operating the pitching machine (accidental or intentional contact), will be considered a dead ball and will not count towards the batter's pitch count. If the pitching machine is moved inadvertently, the coach operating the pitching machine will be permitted to adjust and calibrate the pitching machine. This process shall not exceed 3 minutes.
- The coach operating the pitching machine shall be a coach for the team batting. He or she must remain behind the pitching machine and must get down or out of the way after the ball is hit to allow defensive players in the immediate vicinity to field the ball. Blatant obstruction or failure to allow defensive players in the immediate vicinity to field the ball will result in the following progressive discipline per game: 1st occurrence - WARNING, 2nd and future occurrences - OUT called against the offensive team. The exception to this rule is if the ball is popped up near the pitching machine. The coach operating the pitching machine shall remain in position to protect the player from making inadvertent contact with the pitching machine.
- Player's playing the defensive pitching position must be positioned next to the pitching machine. The player must be positioned behind machine when ball is pitched
- Once the ball is put in play by the batter, the coach operating the pitching machine shall refrain from providing coaching advice or cheering from the pitching mound. The operator of the pitching machine can provide instruction until the ball is pitched. The primary responsibility of the pitching machine operator is to ensure the safety the batter and the defensive players near the pitching machine.
- Per manufacturer recommendations, all MJBSA owned machines will be inspected and have the power spring replaced at the conclusion of the season.

Catchers

- Catchers are required to wear the following:
 - NOCSAE protective head gear and face protection with throat protection
 - Chest protector

- Shin guards
- A gender appropriate athletic supporter and protection

Base Stealing, Running & Sliding

- Runners may advance at will after the ball has been hit fair. However, base runners are only allowed to advance one base on an overthrow. Example: the batter hits the ball to the shortstop and the shortstop over throws the first baseman. At this point, the runner may attempt to advance to second base, but only at his own risk. If the first baseman retrieves the ball and attempts to make a play at second, but overthrows the second baseman, the runner must stop at second base and the play is dead. Note: if there are additional base runners on base at the time of the second overthrow, it is at the umpire's discretion as to what base the runners will be awarded. This depends as to where the runners are when the dead ball is called. The intent of this rule is to develop the skills of the defensive player without risking additional errors. The Minor league is an instructional league and therefore must be played to promote skill development.
- There will be no head first sliding in the 8U Minor league while trying to advance to another base. Any player sliding head first while advancing a base will be called out. Head first sliding is permitted when attempted to return to a base that has already been achieved.
- Base runners must avoid interference with a fielder in the process of fielding a ball or making a play at a base. OFFENSIVE INTERFERENCE is an act by the team at bat which interferes with, obstructs, impedes, hinders or confuses any fielder attempting to make a play.
- Base runners approaching 2nd, 3rd, or home plate, when a play is imminent, will be declared out if there is a collision between the runner and the fielder attempting to catch the ball or making a tag or force out if no attempt to slide is made.
- Fielders may not obstruct a base runner in the process of running the bases. If the fielder is not in the process of fielding the ball or making an out attempt directly at a base. OBSTRUCTION is the act of a fielder who, while not in possession of the ball and not in the act of fielding the ball, impedes the progress of any runner. The runner will be awarded the base they were advancing to in the event of obstruction..

Safety Concerns & Equipment Abuse

- Any player identified as throwing or abusing any equipment, be it accidental or intentional, will be issued a team violation as follows:
 - FIRST OFFENSE- Team Warning. Both head coaches will be notified.
 - SECOND OFFENSE- Offending player will be called out.
- Penalties will be assessed to each team independent of any violations by the opposing team. Exception to the above is a player who intentionally throws a bat.
- A player can be called out and or ejected from the game if the player's action(s) is to intentionally harm another player, coach or fan.

Other General 8U Minor League Specifications

- 2 coaches are permitted in Outfield when the team is on defense.
- On Offense coaches shall be at 1st base, 3rd base, and pitching machine.
- All other coaches shall be in dugout
- Only the Head Coach may approach the umpire to clarify a call or ask a question to Umpire.
- Players should remain in the dugout except when they are playing. Players should not be standing in the dugout opening where they could be hit by a foul ball or errant throw.
- A complete game is six innings with all games being official after three complete innings of play.
- Time limits:
 - **8U Minor league is 2 hours. No new inning will commence after 2 hours from the start of the game,** which will begin when the home team takes the field to start the 1st inning. The start time of the game shall be observed by the head umpire and noted in the scorebook by the home team. The umpire will notify the coaches of the last inning if near the time limit and the visiting team is preparing to bat. Games ending in a tie will be recorded as a tie.
- Situations where dictated by back to back scheduling of games, in which case the umpire will inform both coaches prior to game start time that a time limit is in effect. In this situation no new inning will start within 15 minutes of the scheduled start time of the subsequent game.
- At the umpire's discretion, it may be necessary to call a game for safety reasons due to impending weather or darkness. If a game has not gone long enough to be called official (3 innings for 8U Minor league), the game will

be rescheduled to resume play to completion at the next convenient opportunity. If a game was official in length at the time play was suspended AND the bottom half of the inning has been reached AND the home team is in the lead, the current score is the official ending score and the game will not be rescheduled for completion. For this purpose 2.5 (8U Minor) innings are sufficient for an official game. Otherwise, games suspended prior to the completion of a full inning, will revert to the score at the end of the last complete inning unless the last inning resulted in a tie, in which case the game will be rescheduled to resume play to completion at the next convenient opportunity.

- Games tied at the end of regulation will play a maximum of 3 extra innings as necessary to determine a winner.
- Games tied after 3 extra innings will be recorded as a tie.
- Within three minutes of the recording of a 3rd out of any at bat, all players from both teams must be in position and ready to resume play. If, in the umpire's opinion, resumption of game play is excessively delayed, a team warning will be issued at first offense. At each subsequent offense, the first batter will be awarded first base if it is the defensive team responsible for the delay. Alternatively, the first batter will be declared out if it is the offensive team responsible for the delay. Each team is allowed one warning before penalties will be invoked. When the catcher is on base when the 3rd out occurs, some leniency may be granted by the umpire. However, if the catcher is on base when the 2nd out occurs, a courtesy runner is encouraged to help avoid potential delays in the game. No "warm up" balls should be used between innings.
- Where MJBSA participates in the leagues of surrounding communities, the rules of the respective association will supersede MJBSA league specific rules.
- Per Article XII; Section A of the MJBSA Constitution. The MJBSA reserves the right to modify and change rules as needed throughout the year. Changes will be referenced in the MJBSA's Board of Directors meeting minutes and conveyed by memo to the Coaches, Umpires, other Officials and interested persons.