

**MJBSA / FSBA Unified Rules**  
**10U National League Baseball Rules**  
(Rev. Feb. 2023)

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

### **Age Qualifications**

- The 10U National League is open to boys or girls who are 9-10 years of age 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.
- 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.

### **Insufficient Number of Players**

- A team may start and play with a minimum of 8 players in 10U (National) without penalty. No outs will be given for absent batters.
- Late arriving regular team players will be added to the end of the batting order in 10U (National) 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 9 for 10U (National), 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: 10U National league must pick up players from the 8U Minor league)
  - Pick-up players must be current members of the MJBSA or FSBA, in good standing.
  - Players that choose to "play up" as regular players on the roster of a MJBSA or FSBA 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: 10U National League can pick up two players to a maximum of 9 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.

## Equipment

- All batters must wear NOCSAE (National Operating Committee on Standards for Athletic Equipment) approved batting helmets. NOCSAE approved face guard shall be used based on the requirement of the participating organization. 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 be responsible for providing (2) new game balls, made of leather, at the start of each game. MJBSA/FBSA will provide game balls which shall be issued at the beginning of the season
- Each player must wear a baseball glove. A first baseman may use a glove designed specifically for that position. The catcher's position glove will be used at the catcher position only.
- Bats may be made of wood, aluminum, and other materials manufactured specifically for baseball play.
  - Bats will not have a bat barrel 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.
- The run rule is in effect for 10U (National) league. A run spread of 15 runs after 4 innings and 8 runs after 5 innings of play.
- A team can score no more than 7 runs per inning.
- The offensive side is retired after 3 defensive outs have been recorded.
- The dropped third strike rule is not in effect.
- Bunting is permitted.
- Slug bunting (squaring to bunt, pulling back back to a full swing position and hitting) is prohibited. The batter will be declared out and a dead ball will result with all runners returning to the base (s) they started from.

## Defense

- There will be 9 defensive players allowed on the field. They are to be positioned as follows:
  - 3 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.

## Pitchers

### **The elevated pitcher's mound WILL NOT BE USED IN THE 10U National league.**

- On the second visit to the mound by the coach in any inning, the pitcher must be removed from the position. Any pitcher removed by the coach on the second visit to the mound in the same inning may not return to the pitching position for the remainder of the game. Visits to the mound by the coaches will not be charged in the event of injury. Crossing the baseline and changing the pitchers from the dugout are both considered trips to the mound. If not removed by the second visit rule, pitchers may return to the pitching position in the same game as long as they had remained on the field in another defensive position until at least 1 batter has batted. \*\*\*To speed up the game, the coach will be allowed to remove a pitcher that is under major strain from the mound and place that player directly on the bench to recompose. The pitcher in question will not be able to return to the mound for the rest of the inning but to continue pitching in the present game, must return the next inning or be done pitching for the day. If the first pitcher does return the next inning, they may complete the game if they have enough innings to use. These will not void the relief pitcher's chance to return to the mound but their innings will count toward their totals for the game/week. The intention of this rule is to maintain the safety of the players so they can recover to a playable condition.
- Each pitcher will be limited to a maximum of 3 innings per game and 9 innings per week. Although innings are not required to be consecutive, pitchers can only return to the pitching position once per game. The pitching week begins on Monday and ends on Sunday. This will not be adjusted in the event of "make-up" games. Note: 1 pitch thrown in an inning will count as a complete inning.
- The batter must make a reasonable effort to avoid being hit by errant pitches. Failure to do so in an attempt to "take one for the team" will result in a dead-ball.
- If a pitcher hits (3) batters in any game, or (2) batters in a single inning, the pitcher must be removed from the pitching position for the remainder of the game. The batter must make a reasonable effort to avoid being hit by errant pitches. Failure to do so in an attempt to "take one for the team" will result in a dead-ball. A dead-ball called due to failure of the batter to attempt to avoid the pitch will not count against the pitcher's hit batter total.
- Only obvious balks ("Illegal Pitch") will be called. After 2nd "Illegal Pitch" per pitcher (for duration of game) will result in a "BALL" being added to the count. Each additional offense will result in a "BALL" being added to the count and will continue for the same pitcher until a pitching change has been made. Once a pitching change has been made, the rule will reset.
- The post season tournament will be treated as a week unto itself. The inning count for pitchers does NOT reset to zero for tournaments that continue into the following week.

## No Walk Rule

- Walks will not be issued. When ball four is called by the plate umpire, a coach from the offensive team will take the mound and will inherit the pitcher's strike count. The batter will be given up to 3 pitches to put the ball into play. The umpire will continue to call strikes for the coach's pitches. If the batter receives a third strike while the coach is on the mound (by swing or umpire call), the batter is recorded as an out. If the batter does not put a ball in play within the three pitches (irrespective of pitch location), the batter is recorded as an out. If the batter fouls off the third (and greater) pitch, the batter will receive another pitch until the ball is put in play or the batter is called out. If batter is hit by coach on third pitch (and greater), that pitch will be considered as a "No Pitch" and batter will receive another pitch.
- A hit batter is not considered a walk and he/she will be awarded first base.
- Bunting and stealing are not permitted while coach is on the mound.
- The coach must throw from the pitching rubber. No warm up pitches are permitted
- The defensive player at the pitcher's position shall remain beside or behind the pitching rubber until the ball is released by the coach, at which time the player may charge the plate if they so choose.

- If the coach who is pitching is hit by the ball or inadvertently catches the ball, a foul ball will be called.
- The coach pitching shall not provide any instruction, cheer, or yell while on the field of play. The coach shall quickly and safely exit the field without obstructing any play. The coaches may resume coaching as soon as they are no longer in the field of play. The field of play is defined as the area of the field between the first base and third base foul lines
- These rules have been put into place to speed up the game, increase competitive parity, encourage hits over walks, and allow coaches greater flexibility to develop additional pitchers.

## Catchers

- Catchers are required to wear the following:
  - NOCSAE protective head gear and face protection with throat protector
  - Chest protector
  - Shin guards
  - A gender appropriate athletic supporter and protection
  - A mitt designed especially for the catching position

## Base Running, Stealing & Sliding

- There will be no headfirst sliding in the 10U National league while trying to advance to another base. Any player sliding headfirst while advancing a base will be called out. Headfirst sliding is permitted when attempting to return to a base that has already been achieved.
- Stealing is allowed, but leading off is not permitted. Base runners may start only after the ball has left the pitcher's hand. If the runner leaves early, as determined by the umpiring crew, the ball is dead, play stops, and runner returns to original base. A) First offense-team warning. B) Second offense-runner will be called out.
- A player may only steal (1) base at a time. A runner may not advance, any additional bases, while attempting to steal, on an overthrow from the catcher to the base that is being stolen. No player is permitted to steal while the coach is pitching.
- A player may steal 2nd and 3rd base only.
- Home plate may be stolen ONLY if the catcher throws to anyone but the pitcher. Stealing Home plate is NOT permitted on an overthrow from the catcher to the pitcher, overthrow from catcher to third on a steal attempt or a passed ball from the pitcher to the catcher.
- 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.
  - THIRD OFFENSE- Offending player will be ejected from the game.
- 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. This player may be ejected from the game at the discretion of the umpire.
- A player can be called out and or ejected from the game if the offense is to intentionally harm another player, coach or fan.

## Other General 10U National League Specifications

- A game is 6 innings.
- Coaches must remain in the dugout during play unless they are designated base coaches (1st or 3rd base coach).
- Only the Head Coach may approach the umpire to clarify a call or ask a question.
- 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.
- Time limits:
  - **10U (National) 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 10U-National), 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 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. **Infielders and Outfielders shall not bring "warm up" balls into field after the 1st inning.**
- All Disciplinary actions will be brought before FSBA/MJBSA Joint Disciplinary Review Committee