

Key Excerpts from Minnesota American Legion Baseball Rule Book

The National American Legion sets forth that American Legion Baseball shall follow the Official Baseball Rules, as authorized by the Commissioner of Major League Baseball, with certain exceptions. Below is a summary of key exceptions and other provisions.

RULE 1 - PLAYING REGULATIONS

Participation in the program is restricted to American Legion Baseball teams that have 1) properly registered, 2) completed and filed a Form 1 Roster, 3) completed and filed a Form #2 for all players and coaches, 4) purchased team insurance, 5) paid required fees, and 6) otherwise completed all other requirements for participation in the Program.

- A. Game Rules.** All games shall be played under OFFICIAL BASEBALL RULES, as authorized by the Commissioner of Major League Baseball, except as noted herein. As such, during the regular season and in post-season play, American Legion baseball teams
1. Shall not use a re-entry rule.
 2. Shall not use courtesy runners.
 3. Shall use the American League designated hitter rule, as published in Official Baseball Rules.
- G. Game Limits.** Playing days will begin at 8:00 a.m. local time. No team shall be required to play more than two (2) games in any one day.
1. In the event of a suspended game, innings played to complete a game that was suspended on a prior day shall not count towards this maximum; each team may play an additional two (2) games on the day the suspended game is completed.
- H. On the Field.** Only registered players or adult coaches will be permitted in the coaching boxes on the field. Team managers shall be responsible for supervising bat and/or ball persons (who must be at least 12 years of age and properly outfitted per Equipment Rules) and ensuring that their time on the field of play is kept to a minimum.
- I. Blood Rule; First Aid & Player Safety.** If a player suffers a laceration or any other injury whereby blood is visible, the game shall be stopped at the earliest possible time and the player treated immediately. If the bleeding requires extensive treatment, a substitute shall replace the injured player. (Umpires are directed to give reasonable time to allow injured players to be treated; the umpire's judgment shall rule.) Players removed due to injury shall not be eligible to re-enter the game.
1. Each team must have a properly-supplied first aid kit in its possession for use at all baseball games.
 2. Per Minnesota law, all coaches and officials must be properly trained in the identification and handling of possible concussions, in the interest of player safety.
 3. Per Minnesota American Legion Baseball's Youth Protection Policy ... all Designated Individuals (adult managers, coaches, assistant coaches, and other team staff / volunteers -- who have direct player contact, who are in a role of authority, and/or who travel / lodge with the team) must undergo and successfully pass annual background screening, prior to participating in any meeting, event, activity, practice and/or games that involve youth participants.
- J. Force-Play Slide Rule.** The intent of the force-play Rule is to ensure the safety of the defensive player. This is a safety rule, as well as an interference rule. Whether or not the defense could have completed a double-play has no bearing on applicability. This Rule pertains to a force-play situation at any base, regardless of the number of outs.
1. On any force play, the runner must slide on the ground before the base – and in a direct line between the two bases. It is permissible for the slider's momentum to carry him through the base, in the baseline extended. **Exception:** A runner need not slide directly into a base, as long as the runner slides or runs in a direction away from the fielder, to avoid making contact or altering the play of the fielder. In this case, interference shall not be called.
 - a. "On the ground" can either be a head-first slide, or a slide with one leg and buttock on the ground before the base.
 - b. "Directly into a base" means the runner's entire body (feet, legs, trunk and arms) must stay in a straight line between bases. If a runner goes into a base standing up and does not make contact or alter the play of the defensive player, interference shall not be called. If the runner goes into a base standing up (and is either safe or out), but makes contact with or alters the play of the defensive player, interference shall be called.
 2. Contact with a fielder is legal, and interference shall not be called, if the runner makes a legal slide directly to the base and in the baseline extended. If contact occurs on top of the base as a result of a "pop-up" slide, such contact is legal.
 3. Actions by a runner are illegal, and interference shall be called, if:
 - a. The runner slides or runs out of the baseline in the direction of the fielder and alters the play of the fielder (with or without contact);
 - b. The runner uses a rolling or cross-body slide or either makes contact with, or alters the play of, a fielder;
 - c. The runner's raised leg makes contact higher than the fielder's knee, when the fielder is in a standing position;
 - d. The runner slashes or kicks the fielder with either leg, and/or
 - e. The runner illegally slides toward or makes contact with the fielder, even if the fielder makes no attempt to throw to complete a play.

The **penalty** for the violations 3a-3e, immediately above, are as follows:

 - a. With less than two outs, the batter-runner, as well as the interfering runner, shall be declared out, and no other runner(s) shall advance.
 - b. With two outs, the interfering runner shall be declared out, and no other runner(s) shall advance.
 - c. If the runner's slide or collision is deemed to be flagrant, the runner shall be ejected from the contest.
 - d. If the bases are loaded with no outs, a double play attempt is made, and interference is called, all other runners must return to their original bases.
- K. Collisions.** The intent of this Rule is to encourage base runners and defensive players to avoid collisions whenever possible.
1. When there is a collision between a runner and a fielder who clearly is in possession of the ball, the umpire shall judge:
 - a. Whether the collision by the runner was avoidable (e.g., could the runner have reached the base without colliding) or unavoidable (e.g., the runner's path to the base was blocked), or
 - b. Whether the runner was actually attempting to reach the base (or plate) or if he was attempting to dislodge the ball from the fielder.

Penalty: If it is deemed that the runner a) could have avoided the collision and reached the base, or b) attempted to dislodge the ball, the runner shall be declared out, even if the fielder loses possession of the ball. The ball is dead, and all base runners shall return to the last base touched at the time of the interference.

- a. Ruling 1: If the fielder blocks the path of the base runner to the base (or plate), the runner may make contact, slide into, or collide with a fielder, as long as the runner is making a legitimate attempt to reach the base or plate.
 - b. Ruling 2: If the collision by the runner is flagrant, the runner shall be declared out and ejected from the contest. The ball shall be declared dead.
2. If the defensive player blocks the base (plate) or base line without the ball, obstruction shall be called. The runner is safe, and a delayed dead ball shall be called.
 - a. Ruling: If the runner collides flagrantly, he shall be declared safe on the obstruction, but will be ejected from the contest. The ball is dead.
 3. Malicious Contact is illegal. Any player who, in the judgment of the umpire, maliciously contacts another player is automatically ejected, and if the offender is a runner, is declared out.
 - a. The majority of intentional collisions occur at home plate, where the catcher is blocking the plate. Runners are to slide directly to the plate, or away from the catcher, to avoid making contact with the catcher, especially when the defender is in possession of the ball. If there is any intentional and excessive force, or if there is any perceived intent to injure another player, the offending player shall be ejected from the game. This applies regardless if committed by an offensive or defensive player.
 - b. Beginning with State Competition (Sub-district tournament play and forward), anyone ejected from a game is considered to be suspended for the remainder of the tournament, unless reinstated by the respective tournament authority, whose decision is final.
- L. Length of Games.** During the regular season, Junior and Senior (Division I and Division II) teams may play seven-inning games (instead of nine), as well as extra innings, beyond seven, due to the score.
1. A 10-run rule may be applied after five (5) full innings have been played, unless the home team is ahead after four and one-half innings, at which time the game will be considered complete.
 2. In the event of inclement weather or other conditions beyond control, a game of less than seven (7) innings may be called and considered complete, but in no event less than four and one-half innings.
 3. Any game that does not go the required number of innings (or that is tied after going the required number of innings) may be considered a suspended game and may be resumed at the point it was stopped.
 4. For District league play, each respective District Director shall establish the specific Length of Game rules that shall apply, subject to the above.
 5. For post-season play, Length of Game shall be governed by the rules outlined within the applicable post-season play sections of this rule book for Senior and Junior teams.
- M. Pitching Rules.** No Senior Legion player, may pitch more than a total of twelve (12) innings or make more than four (4) appearances as a pitcher, in combining the total innings or appearances in any three (3) consecutive calendar-day period. No Junior Legion player may pitch more than a total of ten (10) innings or make more than three (3) appearances as a pitcher, in combining the total innings or appearances in any three (3) consecutive calendar-day period.

Violation of these maximums shall cause the pitcher to become an illegal pitcher. The penalty for use of such an illegal pitcher is forfeiture of the game.

For purposes of this rule section, when a violation occurs, the official scorekeeper shall record 12-1/3 innings pitched (in the case of a Senior Legion player), 10-1/3 innings pitched (in the case of a Junior Legion player).

1. Should a double or triple play cause a pitcher to exceed the permitted number of innings in three (3) consecutive calendar days, that action, in itself, shall not be construed as a violation of this Rule.
2. Any appearances on the mound will be governed by playing regulations. Any pitcher may be removed as a pitcher and still remain in the game at another position.
3. When games are suspended on one day and completed on another following day, the pitching records shall be charged as if all applicable innings were pitched on the first day. For example: the pitcher will be charged for innings pitched on the first day; innings pitched on the subsequent day will also be charged to the first day; one appearance will be charged, unless there is a change in pitchers.
4. When time out is called to talk to a defensive player, upon the second visit to the mound by a coach in the same inning, that pitcher must be removed from the mound. The player may stay in the game at another defensive position, but he cannot return as pitcher in that game. Penalty for violation of this Rule is forfeiture of the game, if protest is filed with the umpire before the last out of the game.
5. A pitcher may have only eight (8) warm-up pitches between innings and not over eight (8) for the first inning that he pitches.
6. A new pitcher brought in from another defensive position shall have ample time to warm up. The number of warm-up pitches shall be designated by the chief umpire. (This Rule shall be liberally interpreted.)

RULE 9 - UNIFORMS & EQUIPMENT

- A. Uniforms.** Teams need not be uniformed until reaching State and National Championship Competition. (Note: District Directors, however, may establish their own Rules on uniforms for regular season competition.)
1. Sub-district, District and/or Sub-State playoff tournaments constitute the beginning of State Competition, at which time certain rules pertaining to uniforms and equipment apply, as outlined in the State Tournament competition section.
 2. All players, coaches and managers must be in a like uniform of the team to go on to the field.
 3. The American Legion Baseball Insignia [official patch] must be worn on the left sleeve or left chest of the uniform shirt.
 4. Each team will be inspected for proper placement of the American Legion Baseball Insignia [official patch] on the uniform prior to the start of each tournament. Players in uniforms without the Insignia, or wearing uniforms with an improperly-placed Insignia, will not be permitted to play.
 5. American Legion Baseball Insignia [official patches] may be obtained from The National Emblem Sales, The American Legion, PO Box 1055, Indianapolis, Indiana 46206, 1-888-453-4466.
 6. The front or back of the uniform shirt may carry lettering or an insignia that identifies the Post, Department (State), Town, City, Community, or sponsor which the team represents. Appropriateness is subject to approval by the respective District Director and State Director.
 7. A number at least six (6) inches high must be carried on the back of the uniform shirt.

- B. On the Field, Uniforms.** Only registered players or adult coaches will be permitted in the coaching boxes on the field. During Sub-District, District, Sub-State, State and National tournament competition, all coaches must be attired in a like uniform of his team, in order to go onto the playing field.
1. It is permissible for coaches and players to wear a courtesy jacket, wind shirt or alternate jersey due to adverse weather conditions, provided that the team uniform top is worn underneath. Those not in compliance shall be restricted to the dugout.
- C. Helmets.** All players are required to wear a double-flapped, ear-protective helmet while batting, coaching, running the bases, or on deck.
1. All batting helmets must meet the NOCSAE specifications and bear the imprinted NOCSAE stamp on the outside of the helmet. Any helmet that is cracked, or that has worn or missing inside padding, cannot be used and must be removed from usage during a game.
 2. All bat and/or ball persons must wear an approved, properly-fitted, double-flapped, ear-protective helmet while on the field.
 3. All base coaches are required to wear a standard batting helmet, with or without ear flaps. Non-compliance shall result in confinement to the dugout.
- D. Catcher's Equipment.** Catchers are required to wear a safety helmet, throat protector and protective cup, in addition to normal catcher's equipment.
1. All catchers' masks must have a built-in or attachable throat guard. Umpires and tournament officials shall halt the game until compliance is met.
 2. While warming up a pitcher, either in or out of the bull pen, a catcher must wear a mask. For the purposes of this Rule, "catcher" means anyone (coach, player, scorekeeper, or anyone working/traveling with the team) who warms up a pitcher. He or she must wear a mask. Refusal to do so will result in removal of that person from game activities.
- E. Bats.** Wood metal, ceramic, composite, or graphite bats may be used on the playing field.
1. All non-wood bats must carry the BBCOR certification mark on the barrel, signifying legality for use. If a bat carries the BBCOR mark, but it has been decertified, it is not legal for use.
 2. Non-wood bats must not exceed 36 inches in length and 2-5/8 inches in diameter.
 3. Wood bats may be comprised of laminate or composite wood.
 4. The bat must not exceed 42 inches in length and 2-3/4 inches in diameter. An indentation in the end of the bat, up to 1 inch in depth (a cupped bat), is permitted.
 5. The entire bat must be round, with a constant radius at any point, and the finish of the hitting area must be smooth.
 6. There must be a direct line from the center of the knob to the center of the large end.
 7. All bats must have an identification mark 18 inches from the end of the handle.
 8. No foreign substance or material used to improve grip, which will in any way discolor the ball, may be added to the surface of the bat beyond 18 inches from the end of the handle.
 9. In the opinion of the umpire, any bat that fails to meet these specifications or that has been altered to affect the distance factor or cause an unusual reaction on the baseball, shall be removed from the game. The batter shall also be declared out, any base runners shall not advance, and the player and team manager shall be ejected from the game.
- F. Baseball Standards.** All baseballs used in American Legion Baseball games must be of high quality. Balls approved to be of such standards include Diamond D-1 Pro, Wilson A-1010, and Rawlings R100 or R100HS.
- G. Pitcher's Glove.** The pitcher's glove may not be white, gray, nor, in the judgment of an umpire, distracting in any manner. No pitcher may attach any foreign material to his glove that is of a color different from the glove. The umpire shall remove any glove from the game that violates this Rule.
- H. On-Deck Equipment.** Equipment permitted in the on-deck area includes bats, weighted and un-weighted, and devices designed to attach to and remain part of the bat, such as weights and wind resistant foils. Sledge hammers, weighted pipes and other "homemade" heavy objects/items are not permitted. Devices deemed unsafe by the umpires and/or tournament officials cannot be used.
- I. First Aid Kit.** Each team must have a properly-supplied first aid kit in its possession for use at all baseball games.
- J. Equipment Inspection.** Fifteen (15) minutes prior to the start of each game, umpires shall be required to check for illegal or cracked helmets and bats, and to remove any illegal or damaged equipment. Illegal or broken equipment represents serious potential for injury and must be addressed prior to the start of any game. Equipment in use shall also be monitored by the umpires throughout the game, to ensure its legality and safety suitability.

For further details on American Legion Baseball Rules, please refer to the following Resources:

2013 MN American Legion Baseball Rule Book: http://www.tricitybaseball.org/MNstate/2013_MN_ALB_rulebook.pdf

2013 National American Legion Baseball Rule Book: http://www.legion.org/documents/baseball/baseball_rules.pdf

Official Major League Baseball Rules: http://mlb.mlb.com/mlb/official_info/official_rules/foreword.jsp