

2024 Bellevue Baptist 3rd/5th Grade Baseball Rules

This is a recreational league designed to teach players the fundamentals of softball. Score and league standings will be kept though. It is our intent to provide opportunities to develop each participant through experience, teaching, and encouragement.

Equipment

- Each team will have an equipment bag placed in their dugout prior to each game and practice. Balls and bases will be delivered to the teams at their field each day.
- All batters, base runners and the on-deck batter must wear protective helmets.
- Catchers must wear protective gear if positioned in catcher's box. Please be sure that players use equipment in a responsible manner and place the equipment back in the bag if your team is the last one on the field.
- No metal spikes will be allowed.

The Game

Official baseball rules will be used unless otherwise stated herein:

1. Players and Substitutions

- Each team must have a **minimum** of seven players at the appointed game time to **begin** the game. If seven players cannot be fielded at any time during the game, a forfeit shall be declared.
- 9 players will play in the field (four infielders, three outfielders, pitcher and catcher). Each player must play in the field at least every other inning. In other words, **no player shall remain on the bench for consecutive innings**. Try to get players experience in all positions at some point during the season.
- Each player should play infield at least one inning. No player should play outfield the whole game. The idea is to make sure players get experience in all positions. Players may move freely within any of the outfield or infield positions.
- If the pitcher or catcher is on base, a courtesy runner may be used. However, the courtesy runner must be the last player to have made an out. It is the obligation of the substituting team to inform the umpire when a player is entering the game as a courtesy runner.
- **Injury Clause:** If a player is forced to leave the game due to sickness or injury, and his turn at bat comes up, that player may be removed from the line-up at no penalty, upon informing the umpire and scorekeeper. That player may not re-enter the game in the field or at bat.

If a player becomes injured while running bases or hit by pitch, a courtesy runner may be used for him once, subject to the same rules as the courtesy runner for the catcher. If the injury forces him to be removed from base a second time, that player may not re-enter the game.

2. Duration and Run Rule

- The game shall last 5 innings or 75 minutes, whichever comes first.
- A new inning shall not begin 5 minutes before the scheduled start time of the next game during weekend games.
- Four innings (3 1/2 innings if home team is ahead) or 45 minutes played will constitute a legal game in case of emergency cancellation.
- Regular season games can end in a tie.
- There is a run limit of 5 runs per inning.
- The game will be called if one team is ahead by 13 or more runs after 3 or more innings played. 10 or more runs after 4 innings.

3. Base & Mound Distance

- Base distance is 55 feet. The pitching distance is 40 feet.

4. **Batting**

- All players present must be listed in official scorebook and will bat in order. Each player will bat on the line-up (the inning will end after 3 outs). Players arriving after game has begun will be added to the end of the batting order. Coach must inform scorekeeper of any changes.
- No bunting is allowed.

5. **Base Running/Stealing**

- Runners must remain in contact with the base until the ball is released by the pitcher. After release, runner may play off base or attempt to steal. Players are not allowed to steal home.
- Any base runner that intentionally collides with a defensive player in an attempt to dislodge the ball will be called out and ejected from the game. It is the runner's responsibility to slide or attempt to avoid contact. *This is a judgment call by the umpire.* Additionally, defensive players may not block bases including home plate, with or without the ball.
- Since we are trying to teach the fundamentals of baseball, the defense must make a legitimate attempt to record an out after the ball is hit. The runners will only advance one base on an overthrow or ball out of play. Play will then continue with the next batter.
- If a player is declared "out" at any juncture of the play, he/she must leave the base and return to the dugout.

6. **Pitching and Dead Balls**

- On third strike, the batter is out whether or not the catcher has caught the ball. Runners may not advance.
- Any player taken out of the pitching position and placed in another position may return to pitch. However, he may only be re-inserted as pitcher once per game.
- No player shall pitch more than 4 innings per game.
- A pitcher hitting three batters in one game must be removed from the pitching position for the remainder of the game.
 - Play is halted when the ball is thrown back to the defensive pitcher within the pitcher's circle, goes out of bounds, or is overthrown to first or third base. On overthrows and out of bounds plays (not to the pitcher), all base runners advance one base, and the play is declared dead.

7. **Infield Fly**

- The infield fly rule will be in effect.
- Infield fly is defined as follows:

"a fair fly ball (not including a line drive or a bunt) which can be caught by an infielder with ordinary effort, when first and second, or first, second, and third bases are occupied before two are out. The pitcher, catcher, and any outfielder stationed in the infield on the play shall be considered infielders for the purpose of this rule. It goes on to state that "[t]he ball is alive and runners may advance at the risk of being caught or retouch and advance after the ball is touched, the same as on any fly ball."

- If the ball is caught they must tag-up before running, the same as on any fly ball. If the ball is not caught they may run without tagging up, the same as on any fly ball.
- If the umpire(s) forgets to call an obvious infield fly, the rule is assumed to have been called and the batter is still out.
- If the fly ball first lands untouched in fair territory before first or third and bounces untouched into foul territory, it is just a foul ball.

Conduct and Evangelism

All coaches are expected to behave in a Christ-like manner, serving as positive examples to players, parents, and fans. Coaches should be concerned about their actions as well as those of their players and fans. They should encourage sportsmanship and make every attempt to calm and control inappropriate behavior by fans and parents. As ambassadors for Christ, our desire to win should be subservient to our desire to present an effective Christian testimony.

Coaches should be considerate of the feelings of their team as well as those of the opponent. Be very cautious to avoid the appearance of "running up the score". There are many creative things that can be done to avoid

embarrassing your opponents, while still maintaining the integrity of the playing experience. Consult a staff member if you need help in this area.

Coaches should actively pray for their players and their players' families. Bellevue will provide a brief (5-7 minute) devotion for coaches to share at all practices and games on Tuesday nights and Saturday mornings. Those who share the devotions should be certain of their testimony and Christian beliefs.

HOTLINE

In the event of inclement weather in the area, or for an update on pitch conditions and scheduling information, please call the Recreation Ministry hotline at 901-347-5286. It will be updated at 3:00 P.M. on weekdays and 7:00 A.M. on Saturdays.