

Catawba County Baseball 2026 League (9/10 yr. olds) and Major League (11/12 yr. olds) Rules

This manual is an addendum to the Official rulebook. It is meant to emphasize, clarify, and modify some rules for regular season play.

Section 1. Eligibility

- 1.01 Any player under the age of 11 as of May 1st of the current year is eligible to play in Minor League. Any player under the age of 13 as of May 1st of the current year is eligible to Major League.
- 1.02 There will be no exceptions to the eligibility rule.
- 1.03 Players should play in the organization nearest their current residence. If a player wishes to switch programs within Catawba County, then that player must obtain a written release from the organization closest to their residence.
- 1.04 Organizations or coaches should not recruit players from other organizations.

Section 2. Playing Rules

- 2.01 The Minor (9/10) league can play 10 defensive players.
- 2.02 The Major (11/12) league plays 9 defensive players.
- 2.03 An extra hitter is allowed for both age groups. The extra hitter must still adhere to the playing time rule in the field.
- 2.04 A coach may bat his entire lineup if he so chooses.
- 2.05 A team must have at least 8 players to begin a game. An out will be counted for the ninth place batter. If the 9th or 10th player shows up late, he can be added at the end of the batting order.
- 2.06 15 run rule after 3 completed innings or 2-1/2 if the home team is leading by 15. 10 run rule after 4 complete innings or 3-1/2 if the home team is leading by 10 runs.
- 2.07 Infield fly rule is in effect.
- 2.08 Courtesy runner for the catcher at any time. Mandatory with 2 outs. If a new catcher is coming into the game the courtesy runner is also allowed only with 2 outs. If the head coach fails to put the new player in as catcher following their current turn at bat, the head coach will be ejected from the game. The courtesy runner for both scenarios must be a substitute from the bench or the last batter out if no substitutes.
- 2.09 All non-wood bats **must have USABat Marking**. Barrel Maximum 2 5/8". No BBCOR Bats are permitted in the 9-10 or 11-12 Divisions.
- 2.10 In the Minor (9-10) Division, a runner on 3rd base cannot attempt a delayed steal provided there is a clean exchange from pitcher to catcher and back to pitcher. A dead ball will be declared, and the runner will return to his place at 3rd base. Multiple attempts may result in a runner being called out.

Section 3. Playing Time Rules

- 3.01 Mandatory playing time of at least one at-bat and 6 defensive outs in succession for each player. In case of a shortened game (rain, 10-run rule, etc.) the following will be in effect:

*Game length of 4 innings – mandatory playing time is waived

*Game length of 5 or 5-1/2 innings – the player who has not batted must be scheduled to bat 1st, 2nd, or 3rd in the 6th inning.

- 3.02 The Coach has final authority on playing time for a player regarding attitude, practice attendance, and general conduct. The Coach must notify the opposing Coach, scorekeeper and Umpire prior to the start of a game as to the reason a player who is present and in uniform is not being allowed to play.
- 3.03 If a Player does not arrive before the beginning of the third inning, the Coach is not obligated to adhere to rule 3.01 above.
- 3.04 When there is an injured player who can no longer participate and no other substitutes are available, a substitute may re-enter for the injured player. The opposing Coach will decide who will enter the game for the injured player. The injured player cannot return to the line-up.
- 3.05 If a Player has to leave a game (injury, sickness, prior commitment, etc.) an out will be recorded when that Player's time at bat occurs.
- 3.06 In the event a team does not have enough players to field a team, they may pick up players from a younger team in their organization to play that game. i.e. a U-12 team may pick up a U-10 player(s) to play that game.

Section 4. Protests

- 4.01 All protest can only be made by the Head Coach or designated Coach who is filling in for the Head Coach. No protest will be allowed on an Umpire's judgment call. The Umpire has the final word on all judgment calls.
- 4.02 A legal protest is one that involves one or more of the following:
- *A violation of playing rules
 - *The use of ineligible players
 - *Infraction of playing time rules
 - *Infraction of pitching limit rules
- 4.03 Protests for ineligible players, playing time infractions, and pitching limits must be filed within fifteen minutes after completion of the game.
- 4.04 Protests for playing rules violation must be made at the time of the rule in question. **The Head Coach MUST notify the Umpire before the next pitch.** The Umpires will try to work out the ruling to prevent a protest. If this is not possible, the Umpire shall announce to both teams that the game is being played under protest.
- 4.05 Protest will be handled by a protest committee consisting of the League Director from each Organization inv. If a League director is affiliated with one of the teams in question, the Assistant director should fill in on the committee.
- 4.06 All Coaches should strive to keep from protesting games by trying to reach on an agreement with the Umpires and opposing Coaches.
- 4.07 The committee's ruling will be the final authority of all protests.

Section 5. Time Limit of Games

- 5.01 No new inning will be started after 1 hour, 20 minutes of play.
- 5.02 A new inning is considered started immediately after the third out of the last inning is recorded. For example, if the third out in the bottom of the inning occurs at the 1 hour 19 minute mark, then the next inning would proceed as normal.
- 5.03 The start time of the game begins when the Umpire concludes the pregame meeting with coaches. Umpire should tell both teams, and the scoreboard keeper if applicable, the start time.
- 5.04 The Umpire is the official time keeper and has the final ruling on when the time limit is reached.
- 5.05 If the Umpire believes a team is purposely delaying the game in order to prevent another inning being played (excessive timeouts, unnecessary substitutions, etc.) then the Umpire can allow another inning to be played.
- 5.06 If all six (6) innings have been completed with the game tied, and the time limit is not up, the game will continue until the time limit expires or a winner has been determined. If time expires with the game still tied, the game will be extended for one (1) extra inning. If the game is still tied, it will be declared a “suspended” game and finished at the end of the season if necessary to decide the year-end standings.

Section 6. Discipline

- 6.01 Any player who is ejected from a game will be suspended for the rest of the game and the following game. A second offense would carry the same penalty.
- 6.02 Any Coach who is ejected from a game will be suspended for the rest of the game plus the following:
- *1st offense—one game suspension immediately following ejection
 - *2nd offense—one game suspension immediately following ejection
 - *3rd offense—suspended for the rest of the regular season and league tournament
- A coach may make one (1) appeal to committee consisting of the League directors. If the appeal is ruled in favor of the Coach, he will not be charged with an ejection for the game.
- 6.03 Coaches must try to control their team fans. If a fan from a team gets ejected, the Head Coach of that team may also get ejected. If the Head Coach makes no attempt to control his team fans, he will be ejected.

Section 7. Pitching rules

- 7.01 A pitcher may pitch 6 innings in a calendar week. Monday thru Sunday is a calendar week. This rule applies to all regulation games regardless of when scheduled. This rule covers all re-scheduled and make-up games.
- 7.02 If a pitcher makes one pitch in an inning, that pitcher is charged with 1 inning pitched.
- 7.03 If a pitcher pitches more than 2 innings in one game, he must have two (2) full calendar days rest before pitching again. **Example 1:** A player who pitches more than two (2) innings on Monday must have Tuesday and Wednesday to rest and is eligible to pitch again on Thursday. **Example 2:** A player who pitches more than two (2) innings on Saturday must have Sunday and Monday to rest and is eligible to pitch again on Tuesday, even though the week starts on Monday.

- 7.04 A game in which an ineligible pitcher has been used shall be declared a forfeit.
- 7.05 A pitcher shall wear no jewelry, sweat bands, batting glove, or anything not consistent with his team's necessary and legal uniform which could distract the vision or concentration of the batter. The Head Coach may request that the article be removed at any time prior to or during the game. Exceptions to this rule would be necessary first aid implements (medical ID bracelet, bandages, wraps, eyeglasses, non-mirrored sunglasses, etc. that the Umpire judges necessary.) If a pitcher wears sleeves that extend beyond their elbow, they must be of a dark color; no white or gray sleeves will be permitted.
- 7.06 A defensive coach may call time out for a pitcher's conference once per inning with no penalty. The second time out in the same inning to the same pitcher will result in the mandatory replacement of the pitcher. The pitcher that is being replaced **cannot return to the game as a pitcher. The only exceptions to this rule would be for an injury, official time out called by the Umpire, or a time out called by the opposing Coach.**