

Mustang Local Rules

Updated February 2024

Play is governed by the official PONY BASEBALL RULE BOOK, with the exception of the following:

Team Responsibilities for Games

- **Good Sportsmanship:** Players & Coaches are to salute the parents and other team after each game. Handshake lines are at the coach's discretion.
- **Field Duties:** Each team will designate at least one representative to help prep the field BEFORE your game as well as AFTER your game.
- **Minimum Defensive Innings / Pitch Count Forms:** The Manager MUST submit these the day of the game to their division commissioner (penalty of forfeit). The easiest way is for the manager to snap a photo of the completed forms and text/email to the commissioner immediately following the game.
- **HOME TEAM** is responsible for providing an adult to act as the **Official Scorekeeper**
- **AWAY TEAM** responsible for providing an adult to act as the **Scoreboard Operator**

Pre-Game Schedule

- Due to time and fairness restrictions, **Teams are NOT to use the batting cage in pre-game** (pre-game batting can be done with whiffle balls in outfield) or use the infield dirt until taking the field for the 1st inning.
- **Pre-Game Field Prep:** drag and water infield dirt, chalk lines and batter's boxes, uncover mounds, clean base anchors and place bases

Safety and Well Being of the Children

- Concern for the safety of the players, spectators, coaches and umpires will be required during all team activities including games, practices and associated events.
- No practice swings by any player in or around the dugout during the games. A coach must be stationed at the dugout entrance of the team that is at bat at all times.
- NO tobacco or alcohol use is permitted by the coaches or spectators at the park where practices and games are whatsoever.
- Any player who throws a bat that can or does cause injury while at bat is out at the discretion of the umpire.
- Only adults will be base coaches.
- Players must remain in the dugout during the game, bathroom breaks or injuries are only exceptions.

Field: As per West Region Pony Mustang Division Baseball Rules

- **Bases:** bases will be 60 feet apart
- **Pitching Rubber:** distance will be 46 feet (rubber to back of home plate)
- **Dugouts:** 3rd Base Dugout = HOME team and 1st Base Dugout = AWAY Team

Equipment:

- **Bats:** With the exception of the -3 bat (BBCOR certified), all other 2-⁵/₈ inch minus factor bats (-5, -7, -9, etc.) and 2-¹/₄" bats must be certified with the **USA Bat licensing stamp** on the bat in order to be used for league and tournament play. **NO USSSA BATS ALLOWED**
- **Shoes:** plastic/rubber bottom cleats (no metal cleats or spikes)
- **Batting Helmet:** MUST include at least a jaw guard, but a full face cage is still highly recommended.
- **Catchers Equipment:** Catchers are required to use a chest protector, shin guards and catcher helmet. Boys in the catcher position MUST wear an athletic cup.

Gameplay:

- **Each 1/2 inning is over after 3 outs have been recorded or 5 runs have been scored; whichever comes first** with the exception of the 6th inning, where there are unlimited runs allowed.
- **Maximum innings is 6.** In the event of a tie score after 6 innings, the game is recorded as a tie (except playoff games which must be played out until a winner is decided).
- The umpire shall keep the time - **No new inning shall start after 105 minutes (1:45) of play and there is a drop dead time of 120 minutes (2:00).**
- Four innings (or 3 1/2 innings if the home team is ahead) constitutes a complete game.
- If the home team is ahead by 10 runs or more after the 5th inning the game is considered over due to the mercy rule.
- **INCOMPLETE INNINGS:** If the game is called for any reason in an incomplete inning, the score will revert to the previous completed inning, unless the game is called at any point after the end of the top half of the inning with either (a) the home team leading, in which case the home team wins, or (b) the game tied after the visitors led at the end of the last complete inning, in which case the game is a tie.
- **GAMES CALLED PREMATURELY:** If the umpire calls the game for any reason (e.g. weather, emergency, injury) prematurely (ie before an hour), the division commissioner will determine whether to continue the game at a later date and, if not, the impact of the game on the standings.
- There are **NO INTENTIONAL WALKS.** If in the umpire's judgment the pitcher is not making a good faith attempt to get the batter out after four balls, the umpire will call time, warn the coach, award the batter second base (a two base walk) and advance any base runners (to third base or home). If there is a second incidence of a pitcher not attempting to get the batter out, the above penalty will be imposed and the coach will be ejected from the game.
- **PROTESTS** are per MLB rules – Coach must call timeout and inform the Umpire and Scorekeeper that the game is going to be played under protest, **PRIOR** to the next pitch for the protest to be heard and decided on by the Commissioners.
- **BATTING OUT OF ORDER** results in an out for the batter. Base runners must return to their spots prior to the at bat.
- **EJECTION** of any player will result in an automatic out for that batting order spot when it comes up for the rest of the game.

- DROPPED 3rd STRIKE – the ball is live, out must be recorded
- MAXIMUM RUNS PER INNING is 5 (except 6th inning).
- MERCY RULE: The game shall end if a team is ahead by 10 runs at the end of the 5th inning.
- INJURY – if a player is injured and on base, the player can be pinch run for. The pinch runner will be the player who made the last out. The player may remain in the game if he/she recovers (and at the discretion of the umpire) and bat in their next turn. If a player misses an at bat due to injury, illness or departure, then they MAY NOT return to the game.
- PINCH/DESIGNATED RUNNERS – none are allowed (with the exception of injury – see prior rule). Players who bat are required to run for themselves.
- BALL OUT OF PLAY RULE: Due to the unique nature of our fields as well as field conditions the Umpire will designate at the beginning of the game where the out of play areas are. Coaches need to ensure no equipment or spectators are in the designated field of play. MLB Rules are applied to an out of play ball.

Players / Substitutions:

- Each team must have a minimum of 7 players at game time, less than 7 players is a forfeit.
- All players will be included in the batting order. No Substitutions are to be made to the original batting order.
- No player shall sit two innings, until each player has sat at least one inning.
- Safety: recognize 1st base and pitcher as safety positions and only place players there that best safely play those receiving positions.
- Each player shall play at least once in the infield in the first 4 innings of the game.
- The infield positions are C, P, 1B, 2B, 3B, and SS. The outfield positions are LF, CF, and RF.
- Players arriving late are to be placed at the bottom of the batting order.
- If a player departure during the game does not reduce the number of players in the batting order to under 7 or if the player is injured or ill, then the spot will be skipped and there will be no out in that spot.
- Any player who misses an at bat for departure, injury or illness after batting may not re-enter the batting order; that spot will be skipped for the rest of the game (exception is batting out of order accidentally), AND THE NEXT PLAYER IN THE BATTING ORDER WILL BAT.
- Any player unable to complete an at bat (for injury, illness or departure etc), will have his at bat completed by the player NEXT in the batting order. The “count” will carry over to the next player and the next player will then NOT bat again on his/her official spot that time through the order.
- Coaches can change players’ positions on the field at any time and make defensive substitutions (as long as the substitution does not violate the rules above).
- A pitcher cannot re-enter as a pitcher once they are removed from pitching.

Batting

- Bunting is allowed, however Slashing is NOT allowed – if a player shows bunt and pulls back, then they may not take a full swing (they must either bunt or take).
- Any player who throws a bat that can or does cause injury while at bat is out at the discretion of the umpire.

Base Running

- NO metal cleats or spikes are allowed (in games AND/OR practices).

- SLIDE RULE: Base runners must slide for safety on any close plays (other than 1st) or can be called out. (Umpires Discretion)
- COLLISION RULE: Intentionally and aggressively contacting a defensive player can result in ejection from the game and is an automatic out and the play is over. (Umpires discretion)
- PINCH/DESIGNATED RUNNERS – none are allowed (with the exception of injury – see prior rule). Players, who bat, are required to run for themselves.
- STEALING – Runners at first and second bases may lead off and steal bases, as in Official Baseball Rules (MLB Rules), but runners at third base shall remain in contact with the base from the time the pitcher steps on the rubber with possession of the ball until the pitched ball has been hit or has reached or crossed the batter. Once the pitcher has stepped on the rubber, with possession of the ball, runners at third base who leave base before the pitched ball reaches or passes the batter shall be called out and the pitch shall be considered as a dead ball.

Pitching

- A pitcher MAY NOT return to pitching once removed from pitching in a game.
- Managers are to track their own pitchers innings and pitch counts and turn in their sheets after each game.
- The league recommends that no player play pitcher and catcher for a combined total of more than 5 innings in a game for injury prevention.
- BALKS –During regular Spring Season games the umpire will give one balk warning per pitcher, per inning. During Fall Ball games, umpire will give unlimited warnings on balks.

Pitching Restrictions - Spring

- Pitchers may throw IN a Maximum of 3 innings in one game.
- Pitchers may throw IN a Maximum of 6 innings in one week. A week is defined as Monday through Sunday (the week starts over at 12:01am Monday).
- ONE PITCH in an inning counts as a full inning towards these limits!
- The maximum number of pitches allowed per day for a 7 or 8 year old is **50**, and for a 9 or 10 year old is **75**.
- Once a pitcher hits their maximum pitch limit, they may finish that batter, but may NOT start pitching to a new batter.
- PITCHING REST REQUIREMENTS. Any pitcher reaching their maximum pitch count is required to rest the following calendar days before pitching again. For example, if a pitcher throws 45 pitches on a Monday, then they cannot pitch again until Thursday.


Rest:	0 Days	1 Day	2 Days	3 Days	4 Days
Pitches:	1-20	21-35	36-50	51-65	66+

Pitching Restrictions - Fall

- One pitcher on each team may pitch for a maximum of 6 outs per game.
- All other pitchers may pitch:
- a maximum of 3 outs per game during a single inning, or

- a maximum of 4 outs per game, providing their first out is the *last out of the inning* in which they started pitching. (This allows a “single-inning” pitcher to come in at the end of the previous inning to relieve a struggling pitcher.)

PITCH SMART Guidelines:

					
AGE	DAILY MAX PITCHES				
7-8	50				
9-10	75				
11-12	85				
13-14	95				
15-16	95				
17-18	105				

AGE	REQUIRED REST (PITCHES)				
	0 Days	1 Days	2 Days	3 Days	4 Days
7-8	1-20	21-35	36-50	N/A	N/A
9-10	1-20	21-35	36-50	51-65	66+
11-12	1-20	21-35	36-50	51-65	66+
13-14	1-20	21-35	36-50	51-65	66+
15-16	1-30	31-45	46-60	61-75	76+
17-18	1-30	31-45	46-60	61-75	76+