

ABR AAA Second Year / ALL AAA Rules ("2nd Year Kid Pitch") (Generally Fourth Grade)

Revised Date: Fall 2018

Ages: Fourth graders are generally eligible to play; please refer to league-specific age registration requirements

The goal of this level is to provide players with a fun baseball experience. Players are introduced to a more advanced level of kid pitch. Players will continue to develop proficiency in pitching, catching, hitting, base running, fielding, and throwing skills, as well as a better understanding of the concepts and strategies of the game. More emphasis is placed on skill development. Like all levels, emphasis is placed on keeping the game moving and providing as many "touch opportunities" as possible.

Coaches Conference: Coaches should conference before every game to review the rules; coaches must display good sportsmanship in working through rule questions in a collaborative, positive manner with other coaches and umpires.

Ball: Regulation hard-ball.

No On-Deck Batters: No batters are permitted on deck.

Pitching: Player pitches from 46 feet distance (longer than 1st Year Kid Pitch of 41 feet). There will be no coach pitch at any time at this level.

Batting: Continuous batting order, all players bat. Players arriving late are added to the bottom of the order. Keep your batting order the same for each game the entire year, so that each player knows who he/she bats after. The first batter of each game is the player who was on-deck at the end of the last game.

End of Inning: Each half-inning shall end upon the first of the following: 3 outs or a maximum of 5 runs scored.

Number of Players on Defense: 9. Each player must know his/her field position prior to the end of the inning. To make transition to the field faster, post at the beginning of the game the batting order with player positions for **all six innings**. Players must run to the field without balls.

Defensive Positions: Regulation. Catcher must wear full catching gear and protective cup. Unlike 1st Year Kid Pitch, catcher should chase passed balls, except as provided in the "Catching Assistance" section below.

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Minimum Play Rule: It should be the goal of each Manager for each player to play at least half of the innings in the field. Defensively, no player may be on the bench for more than **ONE** consecutive inning at a time.

That is, each player must play **AT LEAST** every other inning in the field. Free substitution is allowed in the field after any inning. This rule shall not interfere with the right of the Manager to deny any player's playing privilege for disciplinary reasons. The coach must inform the opposing coach before the start of the game that the player is being "benched" and for what reason. If a player is injured or becomes ill during a game the decision of, first, a parent and then, a doctor will be final as to whether or not the player may continue in the game. If a parent or doctor is not present, the Chief Umpire will decide if the player is able to continue. Failure to abide by minimum play rule may result in forfeit of game.

Number of innings per game: 6

Umpires: One umpire who stands behind the catcher if he has gear, otherwise behind the pitcher. If an umpire does not show, the coaches will appoint a coach or parent to umpire. IN NO CASE may a coach ever argue with an ump.

Hustle is a REQUIREMENT: Keeping the game moving is key to getting players more touches, keeping the game exciting and keeping kids in baseball. The first pitch must be thrown no more than 1 minute after the previous inning has ended.

- To make transition to the field faster, post at the beginning of the game the batting order with player positions for **all six innings**.
- Players must run to the field without balls. There is no time between innings for fielders to throw balls around because the inning should start as soon as the fielders are in position.
- A pitcher may take a maximum of 3 warm-up pitches if he does so within the 1 minute (the best practice is to do so on the side of the field before the 3rd out)
- A pitcher who takes more time than necessary between pitches may be penalized by a called ball. (Pitchers should not walk off the mound to get the ball from the catcher during play).
- A team whose fielders or catcher is not ready to start the inning after 1-minute may be penalized by the umpire, starting with a called ball.
- Any delay of game by any player may be penalized by the umpire.
- If a ball goes out of play (a foul ball or thrown ball), the umpire will immediately put a new ball in play in order to keep the game moving. A coach on the sidelines should hold onto to the ball that went out of play and return it to the umpire when there is a stop of play.

Stealing: Subject to the stealing restrictions described below, players may steal **second and third base** (but not home) at the Second Year Kid Pitch level after a pitched ball crosses the plate. Runners may not lead. The first time a team has a base runner leave first base before a pitched ball crosses the plate, the team

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will be issued a warning. If the ball is not put in play, the runner will be ordered back to first base, a warning will be issued, and the pitch will count. If the ball is put in play, the play will stand, but a warning will be issued. In either case, that will be that team's only warning and the second time a team's base runner leaves first early, the base runner will be called out. For safety, ABR strongly encourages stealing runners to slide feet first into second base regardless of whether or not there is a play at the base. Coaches should reinforce the sliding rule.

Stealing Restrictions: Players may not steal home plate. A steal will be defined as an advancement of a runner when the ball is not put in play by a batter. For example if a runner is on third base and there is a passed ball, the runner cannot advance. In addition,

- Stealing will not be allowed when the baserunner's team is leading by 5 runs.
- No trick plays/delayed stealing – meaning no stealing when the catcher throws back to the pitcher and the pitcher's back is turned etc. Umpires will have discretion.
- No dancing – Once the pitcher has the ball on the mound the runners should re-establish him/herself on the base so the game can continue. This is basically a dead ball to keep the game moving.

Stealing/Base Running Etiquette: Although stealing bases and aggressive base running are crucial elements of advanced baseball, skills development and good sportsmanship of players and coaches take priority. Coaches must recognize that, at times, aggressive base running and excessive base stealing can be unsportsmanlike.

Tagging Up: Tagging up is allowed.

Sliding: Any runner shall be called out when he or she (a) does not slide or (b) attempt to get around a catcher or fielder at any base who has, or is waiting to receive the ball, to make a tag. All head first slides will be called out.

Bunting: Subject to the Bunting Restrictions below, bunting will be allowed in the Second Year Kid Pitch level. Coaches are strongly encouraged to practice proper bunting with players. Players should be able to successfully and routinely bunt in practice before being asked to bunt in games. Although bunting is an element of advanced baseball, coaches are encouraged to allow players to swing away as often as possible. Games will be monitored for excessive bunting or abuse of the rule.

Bunting Restrictions – A batter may not bunt at any time when:

- The batter's team is leading by five (5) runs or more.
- The batter's team has already bunted three (3) times in the inning.
- The batter's team has already executed five (5) bunts in the same game.
- The batter has already executed a bunt in the same game.

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- No squeeze bunts allowed. This is a safety issue.
- No fake bunting or waving the bat over the plate as a form of distracting the pitcher or catcher.
- No slug bunts. Meaning a player can not show bunt and pull the bat back and swing away. This is a serious safety issue and the batter will be out with no runner advancement. The coach will be put on probation for 3 games with no appeal process warranted.

Please note that it is the coaches' and scorekeepers' responsibilities to keep track of the total number of bunts per side and which batters have bunted. This is not a burden we want to place on our umpires, and trust that coaches and scorekeepers will monitor compliance with the bunting restrictions in good faith.

Catching Assistance: Coaches of the team on defense should pick up passed balls to help the speed of the game when:

- There are no runners on base (no stealing opportunity)
- The bases are loaded (no stealing of home plate)
- There is a runner on third base (no stealing of home plate)

In all of the above situations, the ball is dead as there is no stealing opportunity. For the avoidance of doubt, once a coach assists on a passed ball, the ball is dead until the next pitch is delivered, so no advancing of bases or overthrow running will be permitted.

Game Time Limit: A game is official after 2.5 innings. The umpire shall call an inning to start as soon as the fielders are in place, and no later than 1 minute after the half inning is over.

No inning begins more than 1:45 minutes after the scheduled start time. All games are also subject to a "drop dead" time limit of two hours from the scheduled start time, regardless of whether the game commenced on time. If the drop dead time is reached during an at bat, the batter will be allowed to finish his/her at bat. If the result of that at bat concluded the game, the score will be final. If that at bat does not conclude the game, the official score will revert back to the last completed inning.

Pitching Limits and Required Rest: 50 pitches maximum per day or a maximum of three (3) innings per game, whichever comes first. One pitch thrown in any inning constitutes an inning pitched. In terms of rest,

- If a player pitches 41-50 pitches in a day, three (3) calendar days of rest must be observed.
- If a player pitches 31 - 40 pitches in a day, two (2) calendar days of rest must be observed.
- If a player pitches 21 - 30 pitches in a day, one (1) calendar day of rest must be observed.

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- If a player pitches 1-20 pitches in a day, no (0) calendar day of rest is required.
- 41 or more pitches – player cannot play catcher for remainder of that day
- 4 or more innings caught – player cannot pitch that day

A day of rest is defined as a full calendar day separate and apart from the date of the pitcher's appearance. Thus, regardless of what time of day a pitcher competes, the required day(s) of rest start the next calendar day. For example, a pitcher who pitches 25 pitches on Saturday at 9:00 a.m. and a different pitcher who pitches 25 pitches on the same Saturday at 7:30 p.m., are not eligible to pitch until 8:00 a.m. the following Monday, because they are both required to rest for one separate calendar day before they are eligible to pitch again.

Courtesy Runner: A courtesy runner may be used for the catcher after two outs; and must be the player last called out. The purpose of the courtesy runner is not to pinch run, but to ensure the catcher is dressed for the field.

Forfeit Rule: A team may play a game with 7 players. Teams with seven players will "borrow" a fielder from the opposing team each inning. This player will play the field for the short-handed team only, but will also play the field and bat for his/her own team. The lending coach may change the borrowed player each inning at his/her discretion, including during an inning if the borrowed player is about to bat.

Ten Run Rule: If the home team is leading by ten or more runs at the end of three and one-half innings, or the visiting team is leading by ten or more runs at the end of four innings, the game is official and declared over.

In-Field Fly Rule: There is no in-field fly rule (all balls are live, caught or dropped).

No Dropped Third Strike: There is no stealing first on a dropped third-strike.

Rainouts: If inclement weather line (703-228-4715) calls off practices or games due to rain or wet conditions, the game is cancelled. If thunder is heard or lightning is seen, play must be suspended and will not be re-started for at least 30 minutes.

Make Up Rainouts: No.