

SALEM SPORTS

8U BASEBALL PLAYING RULES 2024

- Baseballs conforming to USSSA Baseball Official National By-laws & Rules will be used in games and will be provided by Salem Sports.
- Bats conforming to USSSA Official Baseball National By-laws & Rules must be used.
- All batters, on-deck batters, and baserunners shall wear double ear flap helmets. Face masks or shields are recommended for protection from injury, but at the discretion of the parent(s).
- Catchers shall wear a catcher's helmet with mask, throat protector, chest protector, leg guards, and an athletic cup.
- All equipment not in use must remain in the dugout.

General

- Uniforms (hats, jerseys, pants, belts, and socks) will be provided by Salem Sports except in situations such as late signups where providing timely uniform items is not possible.
- Ball gloves, shoes, and other personal items will be the responsibility of the player's family.
- Shoes shall have rubber or other molded material cleats. Metal cleats are not allowed.
- The home team will be listed first on the schedule.
- The pitching distance shall be 40 feet.
- Base paths shall be 60 feet in length.
- USSSA Baseball Official National By-laws & Rules shall apply at all times, except as amended herein.
- one umpire will be provided by Salem Sports.
- The home team will provide a capable scorekeeper to run the scoreboard during the game, unless a representative of a Salem Baptist Church ministry is providing that service.
- Before the game, the players will line up and a coach from the home team will lead the pre- game prayer.
- A coach of the batting team will pitch to each batter, referred herein as the pitching coach.
- A half inning will end after the 3rd out or after 5 runs have scored in that half inning.
- Time between half innings shall not exceed 2 minutes.
- The game will immediately end at the conclusion of 7 innings or 75 minutes, unless the visiting team is batting and has the capability to score enough runs within the five-run per inning limit to tie or take the lead in the top of the inning, or the home team is behind by five or fewer runs when official time expires.
 - If the visiting team is batting at the end of 75 minutes and at any time in the remainder of the top of the inning the visiting team extends its lead to more than 5 runs, the game is immediately over. If the top of the inning ends with the visiting team five or fewer runs ahead, the home team shall have an opportunity to win or tie the game in the bottom of that inning, which shall conclude with three outs, or at the moment prior to three outs that the home team gains a lead.
- After the game, players will line up to congratulate each other for a game well played, and a coach from the visiting team will lead the post-game prayer.

Defense

- There will be 10 players on defense – a standard infield and 4 outfielders. If a team has less than 9 players, the opposing coach should arrange a loan of a player or players for defensive purposes, if available. There are no forfeits in Salem Sports leagues except for a game where one team does not show up for the game.
- The defensive player in the pitcher position may stand on either side of the pitching coach.

- No player, unless ill or injured, shall be required to sit out a second inning in a game until all players have taken their turn at sitting out an initial inning. No player should sit out two consecutive innings. This will ensure that all players have equitable playing time opportunities throughout the season.
- If the pitching coach cannot avoid being hit by, or touching, a batted live ball and is hit by the ball, the ball shall be ruled dead and the batter shall be awarded 1st base. If the pitching coach is deemed to have intentionally touched a batted live ball, the ball shall be ruled dead and the batter shall be charged with a strike.

Offense

- The offensive team will be made up of the entire team roster. For example, if 12 players are present and not injured or ill, all 12 players will bat. In case of injury or illness, the injured or ill player may miss his turn at bat with no penalty to the team and may reenter the game when able.
- Bunting is not allowed in this age group.
- Players are not allowed to steal bases in this age group.
- The infield fly rule will not be enforced in this age group.
- Bat throwing will not be tolerated. Any batter who throws a bat will receive a warning. If the same batter throws the bat again in the same game, he will be called out.
- The batter is out after 3 strikes or 5 pitches. If a batter fouls off the 5th pitch, they will receive a 6th pitch. This will continue until the player hits the ball into fair territory or swings and misses for a strikeout. If the batter lets the 5th pitch go by, he is out.
- If the catcher drops the ball on the 3rd strike, the batter is out.
- Baserunners may advance on hits and overthrows at their own risk. Play will stop once there is control of the ball in the infield and the umpire calls time. A baserunner who has chosen to round a base and is not on a base when the umpire calls time must either attempt to retreat to the previous base or advance to the next base, at his own risk. The pitcher may make a play on any baserunner who is off-base when the pitcher receives the ball.
- A baserunner must attempt to slide or get around a defensive player at any base except 1st base if necessary to avoid a collision when the defensive player is making a play on the ball or has the ball and is waiting to make a tag. The baserunner shall be out if he does not slide or attempt to get around a defensive player and a collision occurs that is not the result of obstruction by the defensive player.

Dugouts

- The home team will occupy the 1st base dugout.
- Teams shall remove all equipment, personal items, and trash from the dugouts and vacate the dugouts immediately after the post-game prayer, when another game is scheduled on the same field immediately thereafter.
- Post-game team meetings shall be held elsewhere, when another game is scheduled for the field.