



**APPLETON PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT**  
**Official Rules Boys Baseball (Grades 3&4)**  
**2023**

**RAINOUT INFORMATION - (920) 832-3900 (Option 1)**

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The following rules and regulations have been established to allow participants to compete in a safe and fair environment. Participants and coaches are to be familiar with these rules. These rules may be subject to change if during the season a team gains an unfair advantage over other teams due to a given rule in the league. All coaches will be notified of any rule changes made during the season.

**A. General League Rules**

1. This league is for boys who have completed 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> grade in the school year immediately preceding the baseball season.
2. Scores will be kept, results will be recorded, and standings will be posted approx. two days after the game.
3. Ribbons will be awarded to the first and second place team of each division at the end of the season.

**B. Players, Field, & Equipment**

1. Regular lineup will consist of 10 players; four of these will be playing the outfield and the remaining six will be in the infield.
2. Appleton Parks & Recreation operates on an equal playing time philosophy. Players should sit / sub out no more than one inning before re-entering the game.
3. Teams must have a minimum of eight (8) players to begin the game. Games must start and end on time, so there will be no grace period for teams having less than eight players. In the event a team is shorthanded, a win will be declared for the opponent, and a scrimmage game will be played using all available players from both teams. All "borrowed" players must bat at the bottom of the batting order during the scrimmage.
4. All players must wear protective headgear up to bat and on base. Do not exchange batting helmets between teams. Each team will be issued five. Catchers shall wear a catcher's helmet, throat guard, shin guards, and chest protector.
5. Participants must remove any jewelry, watches or other potentially dangerous items prior to the start of the game for the safety of all participants. No metal spikes are allowed.
6. Sliding is instructed on close plays at this level; therefore, appropriate baseball pants are encouraged. Pants should fully cover the knee.
7. The Infield Fly Rule will NOT be used in this league.
8. While batting, all players (with the exception of the batter and on-deck batter) must remain IN the dugout.
9. After the first game of the season, the batter will be reminded once to not throw their bat after a hit. Repeated occurrences may result in an out being called in an effort to reinforce the importance of bat safety.
10. Base distance is 60 feet; official pitching distance will be 40 feet for the first (2) weeks and 43 feet for the remainder of the season.
11. The game ball will be a 9" RIF U10 baseball, which has a lower compression core.

**C. Game Length**

1. All games will be six (6) innings or 90 minutes, whichever comes first. No inning will start with less than 10 minutes remaining. If the game ends in a tie, it will be recorded as such.

**D. Pitching**

1. All pitchers may pitch a maximum of two (2) innings during the first four (4) innings of a game. Once a team has used three (3) pitchers, a pitcher made pitch a 3<sup>rd</sup> inning. This rule is in place to give more kids the opportunity to pitch.
2. It is critical in this grade level that pitchers be instructed to throw the ball using proper mechanics. This will lay a solid foundation for control and velocity as they gain experience. It is not about strikeouts at this age... strikeouts will happen as mechanics improve.
3. We recommend that coaches encourage their pitchers to start from the STRETCH position (back foot on the pitcher's stripe, forward foot towards home plate, facing sideways. This will encourage a proper pitching motion, and a more effective delivery.

4. Pitchers should feel comfortable throwing at speeds they are capable of, and should be encouraged to do so, while still retaining accuracy. They should never be encouraged to OVER throw, however, as this contributes to injury and loss of accuracy.
5. The coach may visit the mound once per inning to talk with the pitcher. On the second visit to the mound in the same inning by a coach, the pitcher must be replaced. The pitcher may play another position or re-enter the game in a different inning as pitcher.

#### **E. Batting**

1. All players present for the game must be included in a continuous batting order.
2. A turn at bat will consist of either three outs or **six runs**, which ever comes first.
3. Bunting is allowed, HOWEVER, prior to game use, players should be taught the proper mechanics of the bunt, and the strategic reasons for use of the technique. **A reminder: bunting while out of the batters box or with a foot on top or in front of home plate is an out.**
4. If the player is hit by a pitch, they will be awarded first base
5. The third strike will automatically be an out. The catcher does NOT need to maintain control of the pitch.
6. **After the youth pitcher throws four balls. A batter's coach will throw up to three pitches to their batter, in attempt to put ball in play. No walks will be allowed.**
7. Failure to put ball in play will result in an out, however the batter cannot be ruled out on a fouled 3<sup>rd</sup> coach's pitch. In this case, another pitch will be allowed.

#### **F. Base Running**

1. The runner shall use the orange safety base when running through first base. This is for the safety of both the runner and the fielder. Repeated failure to do so will result in the player being called out for interference.
2. A base runner cannot leave the base until the ball crosses the plate. There is no stealing.
3. Base runners may advance a maximum of one base on an overthrow to any base, and the player runs at his/her own risk.
4. Base running collisions are to be avoided and runners are encouraged to slide on close plays, both for their own safety, and for the safety of the defensive player. If a base runner fails to slide and as a result creates a collision with a defensive player during an out attempt, they will be called out at the discretion of the umpire.
5. A base runner may not intentionally interfere with a defensive player who is in position to make a play of the ball. If this occurs, the runner will be called out for interference.

#### **G. Coaching Staff**

1. Only one offensive coach is allowed in each coaching box in foul territory. All other coaches will remain in team bench area.
2. Only coaches and players are allowed in the dugout, unless permitted by the coach.

#### **H. Weather Cancellations & Early Game Completion**

1. In the event of inclement or dangerous weather, the league may cancel and/or reschedule games. If a game is canceled, information will be posted immediately to the Appleton Parks & Recreation Facebook page, and to our APRD weather line at 920-832-3900 (Select Option 1). If weather is questionable, but no cancellation has been posted, teams should report to their field. While we may play in conditions that are less than ideal, we will never play in conditions that put the health and safety of our participants at risk.
2. If there is a visible lightning strike/audible thunder during a game, the game will be suspended immediately.
3. All games called due to weather by the umpire shall be regulation if four or more complete innings have been played, or if the team second at bat has scored more runs than the other team at the end of 3 ½ innings.
4. Teams unable to play a scheduled game should contact the APRD at 832-5905 (preferred 48 hour notice) as a courtesy to their opponent and the staff. Games will not be rescheduled by the APRD for any reason except for rain.

#### **I. Sportsmanship**

1. The goal of the APRD youth baseball / softball program is to introduce and help children develop the skills that will allow them to fully enjoy the game of baseball. We strive to create a safe a fun, inclusive, stress free atmosphere for children to learn, and sportsmanship and fair play is emphasized. Parents and spectators are EXPECTED to enthusiastically uphold and endorse our core beliefs of skill development, sportsmanship and fun through both their words and behavior.
2. Our coaches receive training that communicates the beliefs and goals of the Appleton Parks & Recreation department youth sports program, and are provided with tools, materials, and support to help them deliver quality baseball instruction to our young players. We expect our coaches to be shining examples of good sportsmanship and ethical behavior, as well as enthusiastic ambassadors of our program beliefs and goals. Coaches should openly discuss proper sportsmanship with their players and parents.

3. The program coordinator and site supervisor will not tolerate abuse, foul language, and inappropriate behavior from coaches, players, parents, or fans, and for the good of the program, this behavior will be dealt with promptly and decisively.
4. Appleton Parks and Recreation reserves the right to assign penalties for unsportsmanlike conduct upon review. Appleton Parks and Recreation also reserves the right to further the penalty upon assessment of the situation.

**K. Appleton Parks and Recreation Staff**

1. Two Umpires will work your games and assist with providing instruction for players if needed throughout the game. In the absence of two umpires, a single umpire may be used to supervise games in this age group.
2. The site supervisor will be on-site if issues arise.
3. Please report any concerns, questions, or problems to the site supervisor or program coordinator.

**K. Lost & Found**

1. If you find any lost equipment, please turn it in to the site supervisor.