



The 2021 Big 4 Baseball League Rules of the Game

National Federation of State High School Associations

The Laws of the Game, as periodically amended and updated by the N.F.S.H.S.A., shall control all Big 4 Baseball League games except as superseded by these rules. Information about N.F.S.H.S.A. can be found at www.nfhs.org
The Big 4 Baseball League is governed by rules designed to meet the following goals:

1. All players will be given the opportunity to play in each game.
2. Sportsmanship will be promoted at all times.
3. Player's health and safety shall be promoted at all times.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Communities	Contacts	Rain Out Info
Spring Hill	Jake Moore (913) 592-2214 jakem@springhillrec.org	(913) 643-3123
Baldwin City	Whitney Kesler (785) 594-3670 whitney@baldwinrec.org	(785) 510-2020
Wellsville	Ryan Dalton (785) 883-4532 Wellsville.wjrc@gmail.com	(785) 450-1025
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Gardner	Nick Wilson (913) 856-0935 nwilson@gardnerkansas.gov	(913) 856-0935

PLAYING FIELD

<u>Age Division</u>	<u>Baselines</u>	<u>Pitching Distance</u>	<u>Use A Pitching Mound</u>
9 and 10 yr. olds	65 ft.	46 ft.	Yes
11 and 12 yr. olds	70 ft.	50 ft.	Yes
13 - 15 yr. olds	80 ft.	54 ft.	Yes

EQUIPMENT

1. In the Big 4 Baseball League, any glove is permitted at any position.
2. Only rubber soled cleats or tennis shoes may be worn by players participating in the 9 – 12 yr. old divisions. Metal spikes are allowed in the 13 & 14 yr. old division except for while pitching on a portable mound.
3. No softball bats.
4. In the interest of safety, the following equipment rules shall be enforced:
 - a. A protective NOCSAE-approved batting helmet covering the ears must be worn by any player who is on deck, at bat or coaching a base.
 - b. Chin Straps on the batting helmets are recommended.
 - c. Exposed jewelry such as earrings of any kind, wrist watches, bracelets, neck chains, rings, and nose jewelry cannot be worn during the game.
 - d. Catcher's helmets with throat protectors or hockey masks are mandatory.
5. Shirts must be worn inside trousers, if possible.
6. During games, all equipment not in use must be kept behind the backstop.

COACHES

1. Coaches are strongly encouraged to arrange and conduct a meeting with the parents of their players during the first week of practice.
2. Smoking and chewing of tobacco are prohibited in the dugouts and on the field. Coaches who choose to smoke or chew must leave the diamond premises.
3. Alcohol is not allowed in any of the participating recreation complexes.

UMPIRES

In general, the league will furnish two (2) umpires for all Big 4 games. (If no umpire is available, or if the umpire is unable to continue the game, a neutral umpire may be appointed by mutual consent of the coaches. Please contact the community representative if this occurs.) The umpire's jurisdiction begins the moment they enter the diamond and extends after the game until they leave the diamond. This includes periods of time where play has been temporarily suspended or when the ball is out of play. During the game, umpires should address all concerns with a coach and not a player.

The umpire has the discretionary power to stop a game for any infringement of the rules and to suspend or terminate a game by reason of weather, condition of the field, interference by spectators or for any other cause, which he may deem necessary.

PLAYER, COACH, & SPECTATOR CONDUCT

1. Coaches are responsible for their players, coaches, and spectators.
2. Poor sportsmanship (such as intentional throwing of bat, glove, cap, etc.) by a player and/or coach will not be tolerated.
3. Unsportsmanlike behavior may result in penalties being imposed upon the offending individual, including coaches, participants, or spectators. Penalties may include banishment from further participation in league activities. Penalties will be decided by a committee made up of the participating communities.

WARNINGS & EJECTIONS

Warning

A warning may be given by the umpire or field supervisor at any time; this, in general, informs the player, coach, or spectator that his/her play or action on or off the field is of concern to the umpire/field supervisor. A warning need not be given by the umpire/field supervisor before an ejection.

Ejection

A player, coach, or spectator who is ejected must immediately leave the recreation complex and may not play the remainder of the game. The player, coach, or spectator will also receive a minimum one (1) game suspension from the Big 4 League.

Appeals to the game suspension can be made through the local community sports supervisor as a representative of the Big 4 Baseball League. These appeals can be made starting the next business day after the infraction.

Protests

1. Only rule interpretations may be protested.
2. Any alleged rules infraction must go directly to the umpire before play is resumed.
3. \$75 fee in cash must be paid to the umpire at the time of the protest.
4. The umpire will immediately notify the other team's coach of the protest.
5. The coach making the protest will then submit in writing what is being protested. Notification and time/date is written the official scorebook by the umpire.
6. The umpire notifies his/her director and the director will notify the League President.
7. The coach making the protest will then write down what is being protested and submit that to the League President, 24 hours following the start of the game.
8. The League President will contact the protest committee.
9. The decision of the protest committee will be final.
10. Committee members from the communities involved in the protest may not vote.

THE GAME

Age Division

9 and 10 yr. olds
11 and 12 yr. olds
13 - 15 yr. olds

Game Limit

1hr. 30min. or 6 innings
1hr. 45min. or 6 innings
1hr. 45min. or 6 innings

1. The time limit starts when the umpire says "play ball."
2. An inning starts immediately after the last out is recorded of the previous inning.
3. No innings will start after the game time limit. Time will be determined by the home plate umpire.
4. The last time that you may start a new inning for the 9-10 yr. old divisions is 1hr. 29min. 59sec. and for 11-15 yr. old divisions is 1hr. 44min. 59sec.
5. Teams will be allowed to use the field for the allotted amount of time. Any team 10 minutes late or more forfeits the game. The amount of time that a team is late will be subtracted from the time limit if it is less than 10 minutes.
6. The 1st game will start at 6:15pm. If games are to be made up game start times can and will change.
7. Teams may start with a minimum of 7 players. If during the game, a team drops down below 7, the game will be considered a forfeit. Only players on the specific team's roster may participate. No borrowing of players is allowed.

BATTING

1. For ALL age divisions (9&10, 11&12, 13-15) - Everyone on the team roster will be in the batting order. Participants that show up late for the start of the game will be added to the end of the batting order.
2. There will be a six (6) run limit per inning in all age divisions.
3. The game will be called when a team is ahead by the following runs: 13 runs at the bottom of the 4th inning, and 7 runs at the bottom of the 5th inning.
4. There will be no extra innings played. If time expires and either team is mathematically eliminated the game is considered complete.
5. After hitting the ball or in attempting to do so, the batter will not be allowed to throw or toss the bat, intentionally or unintentionally, in any manner. A player who throws their bat will be out. The ball will be dead. All base runners will return to the base last touched at the time of the pitch. The decision as to whether the bat is thrown or not will be made by the umpires as a judgment call.

BASERUNNING

<u>Age Division</u>	<u>Lead Offs</u>	<u>Stealing</u>	<u>Dropped 3rd Strike</u>	<u>Infield Fly Rule</u>
9 and 10 yr. olds	No	Only after ball crosses home plate or is hit by the batter No Stealing when the coach/pitcher is pitching	Can not run	No
11 and 12 yr. olds	Yes	Yes	Can run *	Yes
13 - 15 yr. olds	Yes	Yes	Can run *	Yes

* Dropped 3rd Strike – Batter can only run if 1st base is unoccupied when the pitch is made, *or* when there are 2 outs.

1. In the 9 and 10 yr. old division, if a base runner leaves early, the first infraction will result in a warning to the coach and team and the second and following infractions will result in the base runner being called out.

The following rules shall govern the “crash rule”, i.e.: the situation involving contact between fielders and base runners at any base including home.

- a. The runner is called out if he/she does not slide and causes illegal contact and/or illegally alters the actions of the fielder in the immediate act of making a play on him/her. Runners are never required to slide but, if the runner elects to slide, the slide shall be legal.
- b. The runner is called out if he/she remains on her feet and maliciously crashes into a defensive player. Malicious contact supersedes obstruction.
- c. PENALTIES:
 - 1) If a base runner makes contact with a fielder in clear possession of the ball other than in an attempt to slide, an immediate dead ball will be called. The base runner will be called out. If the base runner deliberately contacts the fielder with great force, the base runner is subject to ejection in addition to being called out. All other base runners are returned to the last base touched at the time of the dead ball.
 - 2) If a fielder is blocking the baseline and does not have clear possession of the ball, any contact (other than deliberate contact by either player) shall be ruled obstruction; and bases shall be granted accordingly.
- d. When the fielder, base runner, and ball arrive simultaneously at a base, baserunner must slide to avoid contact with fielder except first base. Umpires will rule on any illegal or unnecessary contact that may occur. In any case, no player may initiate deliberate contact without being subject to penalties.

Courtesy runners are not allowed for any player on base. The only exception to this is if there is an injured player. If the player on base is removed due to injury, the player cannot participate in the rest of the game.

The last batter in the line-up not on base will be the courtesy runner. No automatic out will be taken for the injured players spot in the line-up.

PITCHING AND FIELDING

1. Teams in the 9&10 yr. old division use a tenth player as an outfielder. Prior to each pitch, the outfielders must be positioned at least 10 feet beyond the baseline into the outfield.
2. Teams in the 11-15 yr. old divisions can field up to 9 players.
3. Pitchers may throw no more than four (4) innings in a day and may pitch up to 6 innings per week at ages 9-15. Monday through Sunday will constitute the week for pitching purposes.
4. A recommendation for maximum number of pitches per pitcher per game are as follows:
9&10 – 60 pitches
11&12 – 70 pitches
13-15 – 80 pitches
5. One (1) pitch constitutes an inning pitched.
6. Coaches are allowed one (1) trip to the mound per inning. On a second trip, the pitcher must be replaced.
7. 9&10 yr. old division: Balks will earn a warning, and there will be no advancement of the base runner(s).
8. 11&12 yr. old division: The first balk per team per game will receive a warning to the player and coach. After that, all balks will result in the advancement of the runners in accordance with NFHS rules.

GENERAL

1. NFHS Rules are in order when situations are not covered in these printed rules.
2. Play will begin **June 1st**. (Teams will play in town games if needed before school is out.) Games will be played primarily on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays. Make up games will be rescheduled as soon as possible by the league. Games are rescheduled by the host town Big 4 Baseball representative and games are rescheduled according to field availability.
3. Every Head Coach must carry a verified roster with him/her at all times. Failure to produce a verified roster shall result in the player's removal from the game.
4. Substitutions: Each child should have equal playing time. Substitutions must be made by the top of the 3rd inning. If a team violates the substitution rule, at the time of the violation, all players that have not entered the game must be inserted into the game. Since everyone on the roster is in the batting order, there is open substitution.
5. **Host Town** must provide one (1) new game ball & one (1) slightly used for each league game.
6. The home team will provide the official scorekeeper.
7. The teams must keep track of innings pitched for each player in the team's official scorebook. Coaches need to make sure to get the signature of their opposing team's coach to verify the score and innings pitched in the scorebook.
8. Players, coaches, and/or spectators cannot use sayings, yells, and/or chattering on the field of play, from the dugouts, or bleachers that is directed to a specific player/position (ex. Batter, batter swing), or such sayings to or about the pitchers. Sayings, yells or chattering will be defined as two or more people singing or chanting in unison. Each team will be given one warning. Any further violation will result in the offending team forfeiting.
9. The Field Supervisor will determine the readiness of the field for play of all ball games.
10. The Complete Game: For the 9-15 yr. old division, games are complete at 3 innings or 2 ½ innings if the home team is ahead. If the game is not completed as stated in the above specifications, the entire game will be played for the make-up. A game is also considered complete if at least one half of the allotted time limit is completed.
11. The Field Supervisor/Head Umpire will have power to rule on all infractions.
12. **No team huddles. Communication with the team needs to follow social distancing guidelines.**
13. **At the conclusion of the game, no handshakes. Instead, teams should line up on the first and third baselines and give a tip of the cap to their opponents. This act of sportsmanship should be initiated by the coaches & umpires.**
14. **No sunflower seeds will be allowed at the complex.**
15. **Bathrooms will be open and cleaned frequently. Water fountains may be available.**

16. **The wearing of face coverings is encouraged for spectators at the Sports Complex. Players coaches and staff may wear face coverings if they choose. Face coverings may be homemade, or store bought.**
17. **Participants should wash/sanitize their hands and equipment after each game.**
18. **Players are to provide hand sanitizer for use before, during and after the game.**
19. **Social distancing is recommended whenever possible.**
20. **All participants, fans and staff are encouraged to look for any signs of illness and do not come the Sports Complex if you are showing symptoms.**

9&10 Age Specific Rules

Pitching/Fielding

- a. A player will pitch to each batter.
- b. There will be no walks.
- c. Only when the player/pitcher gets to a four-ball count, does the coach finish pitching to the batter.
- d. The coach/pitcher must be in contact with the portable mound while starting to pitch.
- e. Once the pitcher has thrown four balls, the coach/pitcher has a maximum of three pitches unless the third pitch is foul off, then there will be one additional pitch thrown. The batter keeps the strike count when the coach/pitcher enters to pitch. There will be no “called strikes” when the coach/pitcher is pitching. If the ball is not put into play after the third pitch the batter will be out.
 1. EX.1- A batter that enters with two strikes may only swing and miss once before she will be called out. She may wait until the third pitch to swing.
 2. EX. 2- A batter that enters with one strike may only swing and miss twice before she will be called out. She may wait until the third pitch to swing.
 3. EX. 3- A batter that enters with no strikes may swing and miss at all three pitches before she will be called out. She may wait until the third pitch to swing.
- f. The coach/pitcher shall stand by the fence at the dugout and be ready when he/she is called on to pitch. The player/pitcher becomes a “defensive pitcher” positioned inside the circle.
- g. Coach/pitcher cannot tell the batter when or when not to swing.
- h. If the coach/pitcher is hit by a batted ball a “dead ball” will be called and all runners including the batter will advance one base.
- i. Teams may change the pitcher/coach once each game.
- j. All teams use a tenth player as an outfielder. Prior to each pitch, the outfielders must be positioned at least 10 feet beyond the baseline into the outfield.

Batting/Running

- a. One base per pitch on steals. No additional base will be allowed on an overthrow on a steal attempt. No runner may advance to home on an overthrow of third base on a steal attempt.
- b. All runners will be allowed one base on an overthrow of a batted ball at their own risk. No additional base will be allowed for any additional overthrows that may occur.
- c. Stealing - Only after ball crosses home plate or is hit by the batter. No Stealing when the coach/pitcher is pitching
- d. No stealing home

Overthrow Examples:

- i. On a hit ball and play on runner at first, the furthest advancement the batter may go would be 2nd base on a play at 1st. If the fielding team then makes an attempt at 2nd, the runner may not advance.

2. Batting with runners on base:

- a. A runner occupying first base may advance to 3rd on a hit (including a play at 1st) or an overthrow.
- b. A runner occupying second base may score on a batted ball on a hit (including a play at 1st) or an overthrow.

Ball Park Directions

Baldwin 66006	<p>Baldwin Intermediate School (Baseball/Softball) (100 Bullpup Drive) – ¼ mile west on 56 Hwy from 56 Hwy and County Road 1055 intersection. Fields on the south side.</p>
De Soto 66018	<p>Miller Park (Baseball/Softball/Soccer) (8205 Ferry Rd) – Heading West on K-10, exit on Kill Creek Rd., head north, turn left or West on 83rd, make a quick right then left (still 83rd) at the “T” in the road then turn Right on Ferry. Heading East, Exit on Lexington Ave. Turn North or Left on Lexington then turn North or Left on Ottawa then East or Right on 83rd then North or Left on Ferry.</p> <p>Sunflower (Baseball/Softball) (36500 W. 103rd) – Heading West on K-10 exit on Edgerton Rd. then turn South or Left on Edgerton then at the “T” in the road turn Right on 103rd and ball fields will be on the Left. Heading East on K-10 exit on Evening Star Rd. and turn South or Right on Evening Star then turn East or Left on 103rd St. and the ball fields will be one-half mile on the Right.</p>
Eudora 66025	<p>West Ball Fields (Baseball/Softball/Soccer) (1338 W. 12th) – K-10 exit on Church St. and go North to 12th St. then take a left and go West for about a mile.</p> <p>Youth Field/Community Aquatic Center (Baseball/Softball/Basketball) (1638 Elm)– K-10 exit on Church St. and go North to 14th St. or first stop sign then take a Left or West for a block and at the stop sign turn Left or South and go for a quarter mile to the ball fields and community center.</p> <p>East Ball Fields (Baseball/Softball) (801 E. 10th St) – Heading west on K-10 exit on North 1400 Rd./10th St., fields adjacent to elementary school on left. From K-10 and Church Street exit, go north and turn right on 10th St., fields are adjacent to elementary school on right.</p>
Gardner 66030	<p>Westside Park (Baseball/Softball) (321 Bedford) - From US-56 W. come into Gardner and turn right onto Warren, then an immediate right on Bedford. Take until it dead ends into the complex parking lot.</p> <p>OR</p> <p>From US-56 E. come all of the way through Gardner and turn left on Warren, then an immediate right onto Bedford. Take until it dead ends into the complex parking lot.</p> <p>Celebration Park (Baseball/Softball) (32701 W. 159th) - From US 56- Turn North on Center St and continue to 159th st. Turn left on 159th and continue west, the park is on the corner of 159th and Kill Creek Road</p>
Spring Hill 66083	<p>Main Complex (Baseball/Softball) (900 N. Washington)- Highway 169 to 199th then go East this turns into Webster St. then go to North St. and go West on North St. and ball fields will be behind the Sonic.</p> <p>Intermediate School Field (Baseball/Softball) (300 E. South St.)- South on Webster to South St. (215th St). Turn left. Fields are on your left just past the School.</p>
Wellsville 66092	<p>Saddle Club Park (Baseball/Softball) (320 Pendleton)– on the corner of 10th St and Highway. 33 at the South end of town.</p>