

## **HAB Instructional League Rules (Revised 09/15/06)**

### **General Game Play:**

1. Games will be officiated by players for the Junior League. The Junior League umpires will operate the pitching machine.
2. Each game will last approximately one hour and thirty minutes, with no new inning to start with less than 20 minutes of play.
3. If home team is ahead at end of last playable inning, game will end with the visiting teams last out.
4. A half-inning is complete after three (3) outs have been made or five runs have scored.
5. Any specific rules not addressed within this document will follow the baseball rules as adopted by the Babe Ruth Association.

### **Coaching:**

1. Coaches are entitled to ask for clarification on a ruling however arguing or berating an umpire is strictly forbidden. At the start of a game, a head umpire will be identified before the game and serve as the coaches point of contact. Coaches will allow the head umpire to meet with his crew privately before providing any clarifications to a ruling. If a coach believes there is a problem with any umpire, the issue should be handled in a professional manner and reported to the League Commissioner.
2. A maximum of three defensive coaches are allowed on the field to give instruction to defensive players from the following locations:
  - a. Left outfield area
  - b. Right outfield area
  - c. Infield area along the fence
3. A maximum of three offensive coaches are allowed on the field to give instruction to offensive players from the following locations:
  - a. First base coach's box
  - b. Third base coach's box
  - c. Batting area
4. A roster showing team batting order and designated playing position must be provided to the opposing team manager at least 10 minutes prior to the game. The roster must include at least four innings and contain the name and number of each player. The defensive positions need only indicate "infield", "outfield", or "bench".
5. Each player must play at least one infield and one outfield position within the first **three** innings of a game. First Base, Second Base, Shortstop, Third Base and Pitcher are the accepted infield positions. The Catcher position is only considered infield for recording outs, stopping the runner(s) progression upon controlling a throw from the outfield or stopping the runner(s) progression when fielding an infield hit.

6. A player can play the same position no more than twice in one game.
7. Every player must bat. A batter may be dropped from the lineup for illness, injury or disciplinary reasons but should not be counted as an out.
8. No players shall sit on the bench more than one inning in a row. Neither shall any player sit on the bench twice during a game unless all other players have also sat on the bench that game.
9. Players/Coaches cannot clap, yell, or distract the opposing team.
10. It is the batting coach's duty to position the batter to best hit the ball.
11. Each team will be limited to the same number of practices per week. Practice schedules will be published at the beginning of each season.

**Offense:**

1. Any batted ball must advance beyond the bunting circle or be considered a foul ball.
2. In general, a batter will be given **five** hittable pitches thrown from a pitching machine. A foul ball on the fifth or succeeding pitches will not count as a strike out.
3. Umpires will call strikes on pitches that are in the strike zone whether the batter swings or not. The strike zone for called strikes will be fairly conservative. If a batter swings at a pitch outside the given strike zone, it will not be considered a strike. The umpire will declare the pitch as "out of the strike zone" and/or "not hittable".
4. Strikes will start to accumulate on the third pitch and the batter will be out on his or her third strike.
5. On a batted ball, a runner may continue to advance bases until an infielder (Per 'Rule 5' under 'Coaching', Catcher is considered infield in this situation) initially establishes control of the ball in play. Once control of the ball is established, the runner can continue to the approaching base or return to the previously past base at the risk of being put out. After control has been established, additional attempts to put out the runner does not enable the runner to take additional bases. If a serious injury occurs while the ball is in play, runners will be allowed to advance only one base at the umpire's discretion.
6. If a player throws a bat in an unsafe manner after recording a hit, the umpire may issue a warning. After receiving a warning, an umpire may call a player out for the same offense committed during additional plate appearances during the game.
7. The umpire or scorekeeper can have the runner go back to the base, if he/she has been sent more than the allowable base.
8. Intentional bunting is not allowed.
9. A bat size of 27" or 28" is recommended. A bat diameter of 2.25" is required. A Player will not be penalized for using a larger bat size (length only).
10. Leadoffs are not allowed.

11. A batted ball that FIRST strikes the pitching machine will be declared a dead ball and the batter will be awarded first base. All other runners may only advance if forced.

**Defense:**

1. On defense, there will be 10 players, including a standard infield and four outfielders. If a team lacks enough players to play at least three outfield positions, the opposing team shall loan the defensive team players to ensure the three outfield positions are covered each inning.
2. Outfielders must play in the grass and either catch a fly ball, or throw the ball to the base to get an out.
3. Only infielders (not including the pitcher) may field a ground ball and run to the nearest base or tag the runner to get an out.
4. Pitchers must catch the ball in the air, or throw the ball to a base, to get an out with one exception: If there is a rolling ball along the first base line, the pitcher may field it and either tag the runner, or step on the base. It will be the umpire's judgment call if he believes the fielding of the ball was far enough from the base that a throw could and should have been made (recognizing that first basemen cannot easily catch a thrown ball at short distances).
5. Only first basemen and pitcher (in the exception above) make a force out at first base.
6. Only second basemen or shortstop may make a force out at second base.
7. Only third basemen or shortstop may make a force out at third base.
8. Only catcher can make a force out at home base.
9. Any player play the catcher position must wear a mask, helmet, chest protector, and shin guards. Catchers crouching directly behind the batter must also wear a protective cup.
10. Umpires will award the base to the runner if a defensive player stands in the path, and obstructs their chance at the base. If this becomes a problem, it will be treated like a balk, and all the runners will get to advance one base.