

2021 Hampton Athletic Association Pinto League Rules



SPORTSMANSHIP

ALL PLAYERS, COACHES AND PARENTS WILL BE EXPECTED TO BEHAVE IN A SPORTSMANLIKE MANNER AT ALL TIMES. PARENTS AND COACHES ARE REMINDED THAT THIS IS A YOUTH LEAGUE GAME AND ALL INVOLVED SHOULD ACT IN A RESPONSIBLE AND SPORTSMANLIKE MANNER. THE INTENTIONS OF THIS LEAGUE IS TO BE I N S T R U C T I O N A L AND FUN FOR EVERYONE.

ANY PLAYER, COACH, PARENT OR FAN WHOSE CONDUCT IS UNBECOMING OR ABUSIVE WILL, AT A MINIMUM, BE WARNED AND MAY BE REMOVED FROM THE PLAYING FIELD AND/OR STANDS AT THE DISCRETION OF THE UMPIRES, COMMISSIONER, AND/OR HAA'S BOARD. SUCH CONDUCT AND ANY RULE INFRACTIONS WILL BE SUBJECT TO HAA'S PROGRESSIVE ACTION CONDUCT VIOLATION POLICY.

The following rules shall be followed for the entire season, regular season and playoffs.

MANAGER'S RESPONSIBILITIES

Each team is limited to only (1) Manager, (2) Coaches and (1) Scorekeeper in the dugout. NO EXCEPTIONS. Also, as a courtesy to fans, please try to avoid standing in the sight lines of the bleachers.

It is the team manager's responsibility to control his/her team, coaches and fans. Conduct violations will be subject to HAA's Progressive Action Conduct Violation Policy.

Home Team Manager

1. Responsible for calling off the game due to inclement weather. The visiting team manager should be notified immediately so that his/her players can be contacted. **With this call, an agreed upon reschedule date must be decided on and confirmed with the commissioner. Additionally, the manager must contact the concession coordinator to notify them of the cancellation.**
2. Responsible for field preparation prior to the game. This includes lining the field and batter's boxes, and attaching the bases.
3. Having batting order and position assignments for each inning, determined prior to the start of the game.
4. Supply two (2) new baseballs to be used as game balls.
5. Responsible for cleaning dugout used by his/her team following the game.
6. Entering the final score into online system

Visiting Team Manager

1. Having batting order and position assignment for each inning, determined prior to the start of the game.
2. The Home team scorebook will be the book of record. It is the responsibility of the visiting team to ensure scorebooks match at the completion of each ½ inning.
3. Responsible for field maintenance following the game.
4. Responsible for cleaning dugout used by his/her team following the game.

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Notwithstanding the rules above, there is a common courtesy that should be extended whereas the away team should help out the home team if enough bodies/coaches are available in order to facilitate an on time start and to ensure each team gets adequate warm up time. For example, if the home team is short staffed with 1 or 2 coaches, the away team should step up and help out with field setup and lend as many helping hands as they can in that situation.

BOTH teams should help postgame to rake fields etc.

GENERAL GROUND RULES

1. Lightning and/or the approach of a dangerous storm will immediately suspend play. This is at the discretion of the umpire or either manager and should be in accordance with the current HAA Thunder and Lightning Policy. Any offending parties of the above approved rule shall be subject to a hearing by the HAA Officers and respective League Commissioner to determine any disciplinary action to be taken. This rule has been adopted to protect you and your children from a very unpredictable, lethal weather condition. Please help the league to enforce this rule.
2. Discussion of a rule violation or rule interpretation during a game can be made with the commissioner and the team manager only. All decisions of the commissioner shall be final.
3. Practice in fair territory on the infield is prohibited prior to games. Teams may use the batting cages (if applicable and limited to 1 per team), outfield and foul territory adjacent to the dugout to warm-up. Any warm-up activities should not interfere with the grounds crew.
4. The distance between all bases will be 60 feet.

GAME PLAY RULES

1. All games will be six (6) innings for a complete game. If a game is tied after six (6) complete innings, extra innings may be played provided there is time remaining. A suspended game will be declared complete if at least four (4) full innings have been played, 3 ½ innings if the home team is winning. If after four (4) innings and the weather does not permit the game to continue, the score at the end of the previous full inning (or ½ inning if the home team is winning) will be used to determine the winner. This rule applies to all games in the regular season. Playoff and Championship games will be played in their entirety, at least six (6) full innings. Suspended play in Playoff and Championship games will resume with a “where you left off” format.
2. All games must begin promptly at the scheduled start time. INCLEMENT WEATHER IS THE ONLY EXCEPTION. There is a 2 hour time limit. No new inning will be started after 1 hour and 45 minutes. The game may still be shortened by inclement weather or darkness. If the game is called in the middle of an inning then the final game score will be the score at the end of the last full inning (or ½ inning if the home team is winning) completed. We are on a tight schedule with field times. Hampton Township has an ordinance stating that our lights MUST be off by 11:00pm.

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3. For the first five (5) innings, the inning will continue until three (3) outs are made or five (5) runs are scored. If the final play of the inning exceeds the five (5) runs, only the 5th run will be posted to the inning tally.
4. For the sixth inning (and any extra innings) there is no limit on the number of runs that may be scored and the fielding team must get three (3) outs.
5. Mercy Rule - games will be stopped if a team is leading by fifteen (15) or more runs after the completion of four (4) innings (or 3 ½ innings if the home team is winning). However, if a team has officially lost due to the mercy rule, and if the managers of both teams agree, the teams may continue playing through the normal end of 6 innings or until the time limit is reached. Any change in score from continuation of play will not be reflected in the official score. This entire Mercy Rule does not apply to the playoffs.
6. Games consist of ten (10) players in the field per team, with a continuous batting order of all rostered players present at the start of the game. The infield is restricted to and must consist of a pitcher, catcher and four (4) infielders playing 1B, 2B, 3B, and SS. The infielders must play no more than 3 feet in front of the baselines (1B-2B and 2B-3B). The outfield will consist of a maximum of four (4) outfielders evenly spaced across the outfield. In the case that a team does not have at least 10 players, they must eliminate outfield positions (if 9 players then must use 3 outfielders, if 8 players then must use 2 outfielders). No rovers are permitted. The outfielders are required to be at least 20 feet behind the infield dirt at the start of each pitch. There are no umpires at this level to enforce this rule. It is up to each team to enforce this rule.
7. Only eight (8) players are required to start the game, eight (8) to finish. If a player gets injured and has to leave the game, he will be permitted to re-enter the game at any point. An out will not be recorded for the missed at bat nor will an out be recorded for each subsequent at bat for the injured player.
8. If a team knows in advance that it will be unable to field ten (10) players, substitute players will be called up from the Shetland league. Teams must ask for call-ups and follow the HAA Call-Up Rules. Regular team members should receive priority treatment in assigning positions. **Call-ups must bat last.** No team is permitted to call or show up for a game with their own call-up player.
9. Teams must be ready to play at the scheduled game time. If the team does not have eight (8) players at the scheduled time, a ten (10) minute grace period will be provided. If the team does not have eight (8) players available after the 10 minute grace period, the HAA Call-Up Rules will apply. If the conditions of the Call-Up rules cannot be met, then the game is subject to forfeiture. Forfeited games will be entered as a score of 10-0. Managers will try their best to play a game.
10. A continuous batting order of all players who will be playing in the game is required (i.e. a player not playing in the field is required in the batting order). There shall be unlimited free substitution during the game at all defensive positions. Players arriving after the game has started will be added to the end of the batting order.
11. Once all players on a team have batted, the continuous batting order is set. Any player batting out of

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order will be deemed out. One pitch to an incorrect batter constitutes batting out of order. If a player arrives late at any point in the game, they will be inserted at the end of the batting order.

12. If a player has to leave the game early for any reason, their spot in the batting order will be skipped and it will **not** be considered an out.
13. Each player must play a minimum of 2 innings in the infield. Catcher is considered an infield position for this purpose. No player may sit the bench more than 2 innings per game, unless due to injury or parent's request. A player may play no more than 2 innings at any one position. Inning requirements are not applicable for extra-inning games, however by the completion of the 6th inning, all requirements must have been met. The preceding rule may be waived as a result of injury or parental request. If this situation occurs, the coach **MUST** notify the opposing coach **AND** commissioner immediately. After the coaches agree on the situation, a group text/email will be sent to the commissioner to explain. If the coaches cannot come to an agreement, the commissioner must make the final call. **FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF THEIR PLAYERS, COACHES ARE ENCOURAGED TO MOVE PLAYERS AROUND.**
14. No metal spikes or street shoes are permitted to be worn during a game. Molded rubber cleats or sneakers are the only allowable shoes.
15. Catchers must wear protective equipment at all times. This includes wearing a protective cup.

FIELDING

1. All games will be played as "infield control". Infield control is defined as one of the (6) infielders having the ball firmly in his hand or glove with both feet on the infield dirt and in fair territory. Should an infielder dive for a ball, he must have both feet on the infield dirt and in fair territory with the ball firmly in his hand or glove to be considered infield control.
2. Players must raise their hand when the ball goes under the outfield fence or behind a sign. It is a ground rule double.
3. In the event a ball is thrown or kicked out of the field of play, all runners may take one additional base.
4. The infield fly rule does not apply
5. There is no dropped third strike.
6. Defensive players have a responsibility to avoid/minimize contact with a baserunner. All defensive players, including the catcher, shall not block the base/plate. Rather they should straddle the base when making a tag. The first violation will result in a warning to the offending team. The runner will be declared safe on the second occurrence by the same team. Additionally, fielders shall not stand on a base or otherwise impede the progress of a baserunner without possession of the ball. If this occurs, defensive interference may be declared if warranted by the circumstances of the play, even if no contact occurs.
7. Defensive coaches will be permitted but are not required. One coach will be permitted on the first base line and one coach will be permitted on the third base line. Each coach must be in foul territory. Any coach(es)

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violating this rule will be given a warning. The second offense will result in a forfeiture of their team's permission to use defensive coaches for the game. Repeated offenses throughout the season will not be tolerated.

BATTING/RUNNING

1. Only one on deck batter is permitted in the on deck circle. Only the on-deck batter may be in the warm up area. Helmets are not to be removed until the player has completely left the playing field. All other players must remain in the dugout.
2. Only USA Baseball USABat certified bats for little league / pony league are allowed. If the batter is caught at the plate with any unapproved bat, the batter will be out with no warning given.
3. Throwing a bat will result in a player warning. If a player on the same team throws the bat a second time he will be called out and the play is dead. This is to ensure the safety of those in and around the batting box area.
4. Bunting is not permitted.
5. Any batted ball that comes to rest within the arc area in front of home plate, whose radius is 12 feet and center point is measured from the back of home plate and arc length extends foul line to foul line, will be declared a foul ball.
6. Lines will be drawn on the infield playing surface half way between 1st/2nd, 2nd/3rd and 3rd/home. These lines will be referred to as "the line to advance". The runner must have both feet firmly planted beyond "the line to advance" to be considered past the line. The runner must continue to the next base and reach that base safely. If the runner is tagged out, the out will be recorded and the runner must return to the bench. If the runner reaches the base safely, a determination made by both teams with regard to "the line to advance" will then be made. If it is determined that the runner did not cross "the line to advance" before an infielder had control, the runner will be required to return to the previous base.
7. Infield hits will be defined as a batted ball that does not leave the dirt infield playing surface in fair and foul territory. Runners may advance one base on an infield hit without regard to the "line to advance". For example:
 - a. There is a runner on second base, the ball is batted to the shortstop who then makes an attempt to put out the batter at first base. The runner at second base holds until the ball is thrown by the shortstop and then proceeds to third base. The runner will be permitted to stay at third as long as he/she reaches the base without being put out.
8. No tagging up on infield fly ball.
9. Batted balls that carom off of an infielder or base where the point of contact was in fair territory, in the

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infield, and deflect into foul territory will be considered live balls. Runners may continue to advance until infield control is established. Once infield control is established, the “line to advance” rule is in effect.

10. Outfield hits will be defined as a batted ball that leaves the dirt infield playing surface. If an infielder touches a batted ball and the ball continues to the outfield, it will still be considered an outfield hit. Runners may advance as many bases as possible. Once infield control is established, the runners may advance to the next base at their own risk. If the runner is tagged out, the out will be recorded and the runner must return to the bench. If the runner reaches the base safely, a determination by both teams with regard to "the line to advance" will then be made. If it is determined that the runner did not cross "the line to advance" before an infielder had control, the runner will be required to return to the previous base.
11. No runner advancing to a base shall slide headfirst. The first violation will result in a warning to the offending team. The base runner will be called out on the second occurrence by the same team. A runner may slide headfirst back to a base.
12. All baserunners shall make every effort to avoid contact with a defensive player. If, in the judgment of the umpire, the baserunner causes an intentional collision with a fielder, the baserunner shall be declared out, and the ball shall be called dead. If a baserunner slides directly to the base to which he is attempting to advance, “intentional contact” will not be declared. A runner may slide (foot first) without penalty, unless intent to break up a play is deemed by the umpire, in which case subsequent runners may be called out. (MLB rule). Baserunners may be called out at umpire’s discretion for not sliding on a close play at any base (except 1st).
13. Nothing in the preceding rules is intended to negate the applicability of MLB Rule 7.09(j). (A runner is out if he fails to avoid a fielder who is attempting to field a batted ball, or intentionally interferes with a thrown ball).
14. There will be no leads at any base and no stealing is permitted. A runner must have contact with the base they occupy until the batter hits the ball. On the first occurrence that a runner makes a blatant attempt to advance to the next base before the batter hits the ball, the team will be given a warning. Each subsequent occurrence will result in the runner being declared out. A team will NOT be given a warning and a runner will NOT be declared out for simply "flinching" during a swing and a miss. If a runner leaves the base before a batted ball, the play will be declared dead and all runners will return to their original base. The rules as stated above will then be followed and a warning or an out will be issued.
15. Base runners will not be permitted to advance on an infield overthrow to any base. We want to encourage teams to attempt put outs. Overthrows from the outfield will be considered live and play will continue until infield control is established or the ball continues out of play as defined in the ground rules.
16. The batter-runner will be declared out when running the last half of the distance from home base to first base, while the ball is being fielded to first base, he runs outside (to the right of) the three-foot line, or

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inside (to the left of) the foul line, and in the umpire's judgment in so doing interferes with the fielder taking the throw at first base, in which case the ball is also dead; except that he may run outside (to the right of) the three-foot line or inside (to the left of) the foul line to avoid a fielder attempting to field a batted ball. The lines marking the three-foot lane are a part of that lane and a batter-runner is required to have both feet within the three-foot lane or on the lines marking the lane. The batter-runner is permitted to exit the three-foot lane by means of a step, stride, reach or slide in the immediate vicinity of first base for the sole purpose of touching first base.

17. No manager can touch a base-runner while play is live. One (1) warning will be given; any other warning will result in the runner being out.
18. To expedite play, a pinch runner may be used for the catcher if he is on base with one (1) out. The pinch runner must be the last player to make an out. The replaced runner must play the catcher position the next inning in the field.
19. Should a player get injured while on base, the player making the previous out will replace the injured player on base.
20. A designated bat boy/girl should be used to retrieve bats if playing on McCully fields 2 or 3. The bat boy/girl must wear a batting helmet when retrieving bats and must exit the field of play to the dugout after retrieving the bat. Bats can only be retrieved when the play is called "dead".

PITCHING

1. A 12 foot diameter circle will be drawn with the center of the circle at 44 feet from the back of home plate. The pitcher must have one entire foot within the circle when the pitching coach releases the ball to the batter. If this rule is not followed, one of the following will occur:
 - a. The batter hits the ball and all runners reach base safely. The play stands.
 - b. The batter hits the ball and a put out is made at any base. The play is declared a "no pitch". The batter returns to the batters box and resumes his at bat from the point prior to the "no pitch".
 - c. A seventh pitch is thrown and the batter doesn't make contact or the batter swings and misses for a third strike, the batter is out and play continues normally.
2. A line will be drawn 38 feet from home plate (6 feet closer to home plate from the center of the pitching circle). The pitching coach will be required to have one foot behind this line when the ball is released to the batter. Failure to follow this rule will result in a "no pitch". The failed pitch will not count toward the batters pitch count and all runners will return to the base they occupied before the failed pitch.

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3. The pitching coach must make an attempt to avoid a batted ball. In the event that the pitching coach, while making an attempt to avoid contact, makes contact with the ball, the ball is dead and the pitch does not count toward the batter's pitch count. All runners must return to the base they occupied before the pitch. If intentional contact is made by the pitching coach, the ball will be declared dead, the batter will be declared out and the runners will return to the base they occupied before the pitch. The pitching coach should make an attempt to leave the field during a live ball.
4. Batters will be given seven (7) pitches. The batter will be declared out if one of the following scenarios occurs:
 - a. Batter does not make contact with the seventh pitch. If the seventh pitch is a foul ball, the batter will receive another pitch. This shall continue until the batter does not make contact with the ball.
 - b. Batter swings at three (3) pitches without contact on the third swing. (Commissioners to address season to season number of strikes allowed)
 - c. Should the catcher catch a batted third strike before the ball hits the ground, the batter will be declared out.
 - d. Batter does not reach base safely after hitting the ball.
5. At minimum pitchers are **required** to wear a facemask. They are encouraged to wear a helmet with a facemask. Wearing a heart-guard is encouraged but not required.

PONY league baseball rules and regulations will apply to all playing situations not specifically covered by the rules set forth above.

Age group commissioners may adjust these rules on a season to season basis as long as all Pinto coaches, the VP of Lower Age Baseball, and VP of Rules and Umpires are in agreement to any changes.

50% Rule

Note: HAA Bylaws state that in order for a player to be eligible for the playoffs and/or to be considered for an HAA tournament team, players must attend at least 50% of their team's completed games. Attendance is defined as playing in at least 3 full innings per game. Player or players arriving late, and playing less than 3 innings, will not be credited for the game played. Injuries and/or illnesses will not count against a player's attendance and tournament eligibility, however a Doctor's note must be provided.