

Prime Baseball Rules

“AA”, “AAA” & “Major” League Rules



Our Mission

The purpose of Prime Baseball is to provide a positive, child centered learning environment for children who are interested in playing baseball at the competitive level. Prime is an **educational** organization committed to the development of baseball skills and to instill the ideals of good sportsmanship, personal integrity, and team cooperation in the players that participate in our program.

Governing Rules Policy

All Prime Rules take precedent over current [USSSA Baseball Rules](#). USSSA baseball rules take precedent over current [Official American Baseball Rules](#). Rule or policy changes do not change during an active season. Any rule change made during the season must be approved by the Prime Director and deemed a necessity for the positive affect of the league/division in which it affects.

Team Insurance

All teams are required to carry and have proof of insurance. Limits should be equal to or greater than those supplied to teams through USSSA Baseball and Benemarc Insurance agency in Fort Worth (\$1,000,000 liability and \$100,000 secondary accident medical). Proof of insurance must be turned into the Prime Director prior to the first game. ***Team insurance is not included in your league registration.**

Team Registration

All teams are required to be registered with USSSA. ***Team registration with USSSA is not included with your league registration.**

Age Requirements

Prime baseball will follow current USSAA age requirements set at:

Spring season: **May 1 of current year.**

Fall season: **May 1 of following year.**

[League Age Calculator](#).

Game Time Schedule of Events

a) The Home and Visiting team are determined by the schedule.

- b) The Head Coach of each team is to meet with the umpire(s) prior to game time, at home plate, for introductions and rule clarifications. This meeting is NOT to be treated as routine and thus unimportant. At the plate meeting, head coaches from each team must exchange a printed copy of their current Official Prime Roster. Coaches cannot agree to change or ignore the rules. If a Coach feels a Prime rule should be changed, submit the request in writing to Prime Director. The Director reviews and considers all written requests for adoption if warranted. The umpire must clearly announce the start time of the game to both the home and visiting teams. The official time is kept by the plate umpire.
- c) The Home Team is the official scorer and maintains the official score book. At the end of the game, both teams must have a representative sign the score book.
- d) Signature of the score book confirms that you have acknowledged the final score and agree with the final results.

Spectator Areas

The Head Coach is responsible to ensure NO WARM-UP ACTIVITY occurs in any Spectator Area. First failure to comply may result in the Head Coach not participating in Prime for one game. Second offense may result in a one-year suspension from Prime. A misguided baseball thrown in any spectator area could easily hurt a child, another player, fan or parent. Two-minute warm-ups are allowed on the field prior to the start of the game if time permits as judged by the plate umpire. Coaches are to inform all parents and spectators that NO transportation items (other than wheelchairs and strollers) are allowed on the complex premises. This includes, but is not limited to skateboards, scooters, roller skates, rollerblades, Heelys, or any other type of board that can leave a person's body. This is to ensure the safety of all spectators on the complex premises.

Tobacco Use

The use of tobacco products or e-cigarettes (vaporizers) of any kind, within the sports facility boundaries is strictly prohibited.

Umpires & Protests

Prime provides two umpires for all leagues. Any umpire's decision which involves a judgment decision like balls, strikes, outs, balk, etc. is final. No player, coach or parent may object to or question any such judgment decision. If you want to know an umpire's strike zone, ask the umpire during the pre-game meeting at the plate. If there is reasonable doubt that an umpire's decision may conflict with the rules, the **Head Coach** shall first ask an umpire for permission to leave the dugout or coaches box. The Head Coach may then appeal the decision and ask that a correct ruling be made. Note: **Only the Head Coach**, or acting Head Coach if the Head Coach is absent (Acting Head Coach MUST notify umpire of such duty during the pre-game meeting), shall have the right to initiate such an appeal. **Any appeal shall be made only to the umpire who made the protested decision and the appeal must include the specific rule in question and any supporting facts (Head Coach MUST have the rule book with the specific rule present to appeal any call).** When a decision is appealed, the umpire who made the original decision may ask another umpire for additional information before making a final decision. The plate umpire cannot overrule any field umpire call. Any umpire may overrule their own original call after reviewing the rule in question. At no time shall a coach, player or spectator verbally or physically abuse an umpire. At no time should a player, assistant coach, parent or spectator approach an umpire about a call. This includes rude comments from the spectators and dirty looks from the players. A coach may not protest a ruling unless the coach has a copy of the rules in hand. This applies to Prime rules, USSSA Rules, and Official Baseball rules. The maximum time allowed for a rules protest is three (3) minutes. Umpires are required to allow the coach to protest a rule's interpretation. If the umpire rules against an appeal request, the coach is required to drop the protest and return to playing the game. If there is confusion on how a rule should be applied, first seek the on-duty personnel, followed by the Prime Director to help clarify the rule. If there is no on-duty person or Prime Director available the umpire's decision is final.

Game Day Behavior

The umpires do not care which team wins or loses. They have no personal investment in the game. Umpires are not all knowing; they are people just like you and me. Umpires occasionally make mistakes and when they do, they want to be treated in a respectful manner. Do not give the umpires a reason to rule against your team. During offensive innings one coach is allowed in the first base coaching box and one coach is allowed in the third base coaching box. **All other coaches must remain within arm's length of, or inside the dugout. During the defensive inning all coaches must remain within arm's length of, or inside the dugout.** This rule does not apply during a time out. Please remember a large part of Prime's mission is to build character in our young players.

Demonstrating respect for authority that the children can follow goes a long way towards this goal. Prime is not the big leagues nor are there millions of dollars involved. Please keep the adults under control and keep the game fun for the young players. When a Coach continuously argues with the umpire it sends the message to the players that only the coach is in the best position to make the call, when that is seldom the case. Keep your players focused on playing and enjoying the game, not blaming a game lost on an umpire's judgment call.

Illegal Forfeits

If any team is found to forfeit a scheduled Prime game to go play a tournament or other league game, the Head Coach of that said team will be expelled from Prime for the remainder of the current season plus two (2) additional seasons. Multiple infractions will mandate a lifetime ban from Prime.

Disciplinary Policy & Action

The Head Coach is responsible for the behavior of their players, assistant coaches, parents and other team spectators. If an assistant coach, player or parent is ejected during a Prime game, and in the umpire's opinion the Head Coach could have done something to prevent the situation and **didn't**, the Head Coach will also be ejected during the same game. **Ejected coaches and/or spectators** must leave the immediate area (*field, spectator stands, etc.*) and go to the Parking Lot. Any player, coach or spectator that is ejected from a game and does not leave the fields quietly and in a respectful manner, will be subject to further disciplinary actions including suspension from future games. The specific penalty for the person who was ejected will be determined by the Prime Director and the specific penalty will be at the discretion of the Prime Director on a case by case basis. These suspensions could result in additional games, one-year suspension and/or a lifetime suspension from Prime activity. If any person is ejected from a game twice in one season, that individual is not allowed to participate in Prime in any capacity for one year from the date of the second infraction. **If a player is ejected from a game**, that player is to remain in the players' dugout during the duration of the game. The umpire, under no circumstance, will force the player to leave the playing field. If the player that has been ejected continues to disrupt the game being played, the umpire does have the authority to confront the said player's coach and request that the player's parents or legal guardian remove the player from the field. Removal of the player from the playing field can only be done by the player's coach after it has been determined that a parent or legal guardian over the said player is available at that time. If a parent or legal guardian is not available, the player must remain in the teams' dugout until the conclusion of the game. If the player has disrupted the game and cannot be removed from the playing field, the umpire will issue a warning to the player's coach. If the player continues to disrupt the game after the umpires warning, the player's team will forfeit the game. Stay far enough away from the umpire so that you do not accidentally bump or touch them. Any physical contact could result in criminal charges. Unsportsmanlike contact by a coach or player is called at the discretion of the umpire. This includes defensive interference and inappropriate contact by a runner. Penalty for unsportsmanlike contact is ejection from the game. Arguing with the umpire or using obscenity constitutes unsportsmanlike conduct. For the first offense in the game, the coach, player or spectator may be issued a warning or ejected from the game. Second offense in the same game is an automatic ejection. The umpire may or may not issue a warning before ejecting a player, coach or spectator. Umpires may call a player out for throwing helmets or bats in anger. Second offense by the same player will result in automatic removal from the game. If a coach throws a helmet or bat in anger, the batter is out. **If the batter is already out, then the next batter in the order is out.** All players must adhere to the decision of the umpire without argument. No coach, parent or player should ever confront an umpire regarding calls made in the game, once the umpire leaves the field. The area designated for the umpires to change is considered a "Safe Zone" for umpires. Only Prime Umpires and Prime Officials are

permitted in that area. Any coach, parent or player that follows an umpire into that area with confrontational intentions, will face suspension determined by the Prime Director.

Expulsion

If a Coach is expelled from Prime, he/she will not be allowed to participate in **ANY** Prime activity. This includes league play and Prime sponsored tournaments. The Coach must then request reinstatement directly to the Prime Director when the expulsion time has terminated. **Note:** This includes any expulsion/suspension imposed by USSSA.

Rosters

- All teams shall maintain an Official USSSA Online Roster.
- Prime Baseball follows [Current USSSA guidelines and rules](#) regarding How a Team Qualifies (Roster Qualified / Frozen) (USSSA Rules 3.07.A – 3.07.C).
- Rosters are frozen **May 1 (Spring season only)**
- No Prime roster may contain any player currently playing in a USSSA sanctioned “A” class rec league.
- No player may play on two prime teams within the same league/age division.
- Once league play begins, players are required to remain with that team through the spring season to include ALL post season play through July 31. Coaches, managers, parents or players will not enlist or recruit players from other teams.
- No AA roster may contain more than 2 AAA classified players.
- No AA roster may contain any Major classified players.

Illegal Player

If a player is not listed on the Official USSSA online Roster and plays, then the coach will be suspended for one (1) game. The team will forfeit all games the player played. If a second offense occurs then the coach may be subject to permanent suspension in Prime.

NOTE: All penalties are at the discretion of the Prime Director. Additional penalties can be added at any time based on the situation and nature of the offense. The penalties outlined in this rule book are guidelines for the coaches, parents and players and are not final. Final penalties will be governed by the Prime Director.

Time Limits

Age	Time Limit	Innings
6U	1 hour	6
7U & 8U	1 hour and 15 minutes	6
9U & 10U	1 hour and 30 minutes	6
11U & 12U	1 hour and 45 minutes	7
13U & 14U	1 hour and 45 minutes	7
14U Major/16U/18U	1 hour and 45 minutes	7

A game shall be considered complete when time has expired or the required number of innings has been played. If time has expired, the inning shall be completed if the home team score is less than the visitor’s score AND the game is not mathematically out of reach. A game called because weather or other reasons by the umpire is considered a complete game when more than half of the innings have been completed or more than half the game time has elapsed. If the game is called in the middle of an inning after more than half the innings or half the game time has expired, the final score will revert to the score of the last completed inning. ONLY complete innings will be recorded for scoring purposes after the 4th inning is completed. See #19 Game Cancellation for resuming play

when the game is not considered complete. No inning may start after time has expired. The next inning starts **immediately** after the Home Team has recorded its third offensive out. If time expires in the middle of the inning, the inning will be completed unless the Home Team is at bat and ahead in score, in which case the umpire will declare the game complete and the score recorded as Final. When the game has ended, both teams should immediately **clean out their dugout and leave the field**. Under no circumstance should the game continue if the Umpire has declared the game over.

Base and Pitching Distances:

Age	Bases	Pitching
6U	55'	N/A
7U & 8U	60'	40'
9U & 10U	65'	46'
11U & 12U	70'	50'
13U & 14U	80'	54'
14U Major/16U/18U	90'	60.5'

Pitching Rules

Prime Baseball follows [current USSSA guidelines and rules](#) regarding pitching rules (USSSA Rules 7.05.A – 7.05.B.8).

General Rules: This applies to all Leagues

- 7 Runs Per Inning:** There is a 7-run rule per inning per team in **all** leagues. After seven runs the batting team must take the field.
- Mercy Run Rule:** a) 6 inning game: 15 runs after 3 complete, 8 runs after 4 complete. b) 7 inning game: 15 runs after 3 complete innings, 12 runs after 4 complete innings, 8 runs after 5 complete innings.
- Playing Time:** Defensive playing time is determined by the head coach of each team. It is highly recommended that all players in the lineup play at least every other inning. Remember, you are trying to educate your players and teach them the game of competitive baseball.
- Stealing Home:** Any time a batter **swings** at a pitch while a runner is trying to steal home, the batter will automatically be called out and the runners will return to the base they occupied prior to the pitch. The Head Coach will receive a warning for the 1st offense and be ejected if it happens a second time.
- Batting Order:** Every player must bat. The batting order shall list all eligible players that have shown up for the game. Each team exchanges their respective team batting order prior to the start of the game. The batting order may not be changed for the duration of the game. Each player must bat in the order listed before starting over at the top of the batting order. If a player has not shown up at the start of the game, they are moved to the bottom of the batting order. If that player has not arrived by their turn to bat they are recorded as an out or scratched and are not allowed to play in that game. If the team does not have nine players then the "9th batter" is called out at each turn of bat.
- Bats:** a) Prime Baseball follows [Current USSSA guidelines and rules](#) regarding bat sizing, material, construction, and appropriate markings (USSSA Rules 7.01.C.A – 7.0.1.C.D). All other bat regulations (USSSA Rules 7.0.1.C.E - 7.0.1.C.N) are at the sole discretion of the Prime Director. Bats qualified as "worn" under rule 7.0.1.C.L due to pure cosmetics (faded paint) will be allowed for Prime league play provided that the USSSA approved stamp or verbiage is still visible on the bat. Prime will allow bats stamped with the **USA Baseball mark**. Prime prohibits attachments and alterations of bats in all leagues. [Withdrawn and/or non-compliant Baseball Bat Models](#).

Penalties for using an illegal bat:

- First Offense** - If the umpire discovers that the bat does not conform to USSSA Rule 7.01.C until a time during or after which the bat has been used in play, it shall not be grounds for declaring the batter out and head coach ejected from the game. If the umpire discovers that a bat has been used to put a ball in play and before the next legal pitch, the defensive team will have the choice of the result of play or the batter being called out and all

runners returning to the base occupied before the next pitch. The head coach will still be ejected from game even if defensive team chooses the result of the play.

2. **Second Offense** – If a team is found in violation of this rule a second time, then the acting head coach will be ejected in addition to the First Offense penalty and the head coach will serve a two-game suspension from the following two games.

It will be the Head Coach's responsibility to not only educate the players and parents on his/her team on the rules, but also to take inventory of what bats may be in the dugout before the game and insure that only legal bats are used.

7. **The Ball:** [Current USSSA guidelines and rules](#) regarding ball sizing, material, construction, and weight (USSSA Rules 7.01.K) are used for league play. NOTE: An Official USSSA licensed baseball is **not** required for league play.

8. **Metal Cleats:** Prime Baseball follows [Current USSSA guidelines and rules](#) regarding metal cleats (USSSA Rule 7.01.E).

9. **Protective Gear:** Prime Baseball follows [Current USSSA guidelines and rules](#) regarding protective equipment (USSSA Rules 7.01.F – 7.01.G)

10. **Game Attire:** Players may not wear **ANY** jewelry, including earrings. Players can wear athletic necklaces if they are not a distraction to the game AND MUST have a break-away clasp. Coaches may wear watches, bracelets, and rings. Male coaches may not wear earrings when on the field. Players must wear baseball pants while participating in a Prime game. The “AA” and “Open” Divisions provide their own uniforms. Prime does not allow anything other than team name, team logo, player number and/or player name to be displayed on the uniform. This does not include the apparel logo that may come as part of the uniform from the manufacturer. Sponsorship patches and the sort, are not allowed on the uniform. Players can display logos or other appropriate symbols on the helmet (i.e. pink ribbon stickers, homerun stickers, sponsor’s logo, etc.).

11. **Dugout Assignments:** The Home and Visiting teams shall occupy the dugout corresponding to the scoreboard. If no scoreboard is available, then it is on a first come first serve basis. Both teams **MUST** clean their dugouts after the game. Leave the dug out immediately after the game to make room for the next team. Post-game team meetings are to take place outside the fence in the spectator area.

12. **Field Duties:** **Home** team in the first game of the day prepare the scoreboard controller. **Home** team in the last game of the day close the field by removing score controller and returning it back to pick up location. Once the last representative of Prime leaves the ballpark area all teams must also leave.

13. **Sliding Definition:** Whenever a tag play is evident, a runner must seek to avoid contact with the fielder and / or catcher. Attempting to jump, leap, or dive over the fielder and / or catcher is not interpreted as seeking to avoid contact. Malicious contact shall supersede all obstruction penalties. When in doubt, slide.

Malicious contact penalty: The runner shall be called out and may be ejected from the game at the umpire’s discretion.

Comment: When enforcing this rule, the umpire should judge the runner’s intent. If the umpire feels that the contact was unintentional, then the runner should only be declared out. If the umpire feels that the contact was intentional and / or malicious, then the runner should be declared out and ejected.

The pathway belongs to the runner: The fielder/catcher may not block the base/plate without possession of the ball. Fielders/catchers should only be in the pathway when they have possession of or attempting to field the ball.

Obstruction shall be called on any blocked base where the fielder is not in possession of the ball. Fielders may not block a base on an attempted pick off play; a clear pathway must be present.

14. **Minimum Players:** Prime league play and standings are based on closed registered team rosters. A team must field a minimum of 8 registered roster players to play an official game. If a team plays with 8 roster players the 9th batting position will be called out automatically each time that position is reached. A team forfeits the game if the team cannot field 8 roster players within 15 minutes after posted starting time on the schedule. However, a practice game should be played and umpires are required to officiate the game to receive compensation. A practice game may be played with borrowed players providing those players are appropriate league age and registered with Prime for the current season. A make up or rescheduling of game or games will not be granted for teams fielding less than a minimum of roster players. Coaches violating the spirit of this rule are subject to disciplinary action by the Prime Director, including but not limited to game suspension, games and seasonal forfeits, up to removal and suspension from the Prime league.

15. **Player AWOL:** If a player leaves the game for any reason other than a game related injury or sickness the team receives an out every time it is that player’s turn to bat. If a player leaves the game with a game related injury and

there are only eight players left, the team receives an out when it is that player's turn to bat. Players that leave the game are not permitted to return to the game.

16. **Free Substitution:** This rule is in effect for each league game except for pitchers. Once removed from the mound, the pitcher may reenter the game, but may not return to the mound.

17. **Pitching Log:** Each team **must** maintain a pitching log. This log is presented to the opposing coach at the beginning of each game. The opposing coach signs off on the log after each game. Failure to produce a pitching log upon request by the Umpire, Opposing Coach or Prime Director will result in the ineligibility of the questioned pitcher to pitch in the game the log was requested for. If a Team breaks the pitching rules set by the league, the Head Coach will serve a suspension (to be determined by the Prime Director), and the pitcher will not be permitted to pitch for seven (7) days.

18. **Scorekeeping:** Each team is responsible for furnishing a scorekeeper. The home team is the official game scorekeeper. **The visiting team is responsible for having someone over the age of sixteen operate the scoreboard. The scoreboard operator from the visiting team must sit and operate the scoreboard from the scorekeeper's table. The home scorekeeper must be located on OR next to the front row of the home team bleachers.** Both scorekeepers should verify the results before the game reports are finalized to eliminate any discrepancies. **Coaches of both teams are responsible for having the game book signed immediately after the completed game before the umpire leaves the field to ensure accurate and timely game stats.**

19. **Game Cancellation:** When a game is postponed by the complex due to weather or field conditions, it is possible the game may not be rescheduled. Prime will attempt to accommodate when possible. Because of the tremendous interest in baseball and a limited number of fields, rescheduling cancelled games is NOT guaranteed. If a scheduled game begins, but is not completed per Prime Rules, due to weather or other reason as determined by a Prime Official, Prime will make every effort to reschedule the game to RESUME where it left off at the time it went into suspension. Any player that could make the originally scheduled date, but unable to make the rescheduled date, should be removed from the lineup without penalty, if the team has the minimum number of players. Any player unable to make the originally scheduled date but can make the rescheduled date, is to be added to the bottom of the lineup, regardless of where the game resumes. Any pitcher that had previously been removed from the mound, may not return. All outs recorded for a pitcher before the game went into suspension carries over to the resumed game.

20. **Re-Schedule Policy:** Only games cancelled due to weather-related issues will be rescheduled. If a team knows prior to schedule being posted that a date will be affected, they should bring their request to the attention of the scheduler. There is no guarantee that a game request can be met.

21. **Fake Bunt/Slashing:** Is permitted.

22. **Pre-game Practice:** Teams may NOT take infield practice prior to the start of the game. All pre-game warm-up should take place in the outfield (grass area), or designated warm-up areas.

23. Prime Baseball follows [current USSSA guidelines and rules](#) regarding intentional walks (USSSA Rule 7.04.A)

24. **Texas Tie Breaker Rule:** If the score is tied after regulation, the game will be extended one (1) extra inning. The last two batters from the previous inning will be placed on 2nd (last batter) and 3rd (next to last batter) base with one (1) out a no count on batter. Both teams will have this opportunity to break the tie. If the game is still tied after the one (1) extra inning, the game is declared a tie. **(Example: If batters #4 and #5 are the two batters from the previous inning, batter #4 will be placed on 3rd base and batter #5 will be placed on 2nd base.)**

6U Modified League

1. The Batter is allowed 3 pitches. If the 3rd pitch (or subsequent pitches due to fouls) is fouled off, the batter may receive another pitch. If the ball has not been put into play after the pitches, the batter is permitted 2 swings on the Tee, if necessary. If the batter doesn't reach base safely after two swings at the tee, the batter is declared out. Batters may also opt to take 5 swings off the tee, if he/she chooses not to receive pitches. If a batter decides to go straight to the tee however, the batter will not be permitted to receive pitches after the tee swings, until his/her next "at bat" in the order.

2. There shall be at least 8 players on the field always and each player shall be in a regular baseball position. The game may be played with ten defensive players provided the tenth player is positioned in the outfield.

3. **Pitching Coach:** The defensive pitcher must start each play on either the first or third base side of the pitching rubber and must be within 5 feet of the pitching rubber. The coach cannot field the ball once the ball is in play. The

pitching coach is not allowed to coach in any capacity while his/her team is in offense. This includes but is not limited to coaching the batter and/or base runners. The pitching coach may not relay information through another coach that is deemed "coaching". When the ball is put in play the pitching coach must make every effort to stay out of the way and not interfere with defensive play on the field in any way. The pitching coach needs to get off the infield if the ball is hit into the outfield. He/she may go behind home plate to get the bat out of the way of the catcher and runners. A pitching coach that is not following these guidelines, should first be issued a warning by the umpire. If it continues then the umpire is to order the pitching coach to be removed from the mound for the remainder of the game, and an alternate coach must assume the pitching duties. If the problem persists in future games the pitching coach may be banned from pitching in future games by the Board.

4. The ball cannot be rolled to any base for an out. The ball must be thrown. Defensive players cannot "Out Run" the runner to a base unless that player is the "owner" of the base (1st Baseman can run to tag first base, 2nd or Shortstop can run to tag 2nd base, 3rd baseman can run to tag third base). The Pitcher is not allowed to receive a ball and then proceed to run and tag the runner or 1st base for an out. The Pitcher is not allowed to receive a ball and then proceed to run and tag the runner or Home Plate for an out. If this occurs, the runner will be allowed to score and play resumes with no out being called. If the Pitcher must take more than 2 steps towards the runner or base, the Pitcher **MUST** throw the ball to the said base/plate.
5. If a hit ball hits the pitching coach before being touched by a player, then the play is dead and a pitch is counted for the batter as a foul ball. If the coach intentionally interferes with the ball then the batter is out.
6. There shall be nine defensive players on the field always and each player shall be in a regular baseball position. The game may be played with ten defensive players provided the tenth player is positioned in the outfield.
7. Play is stopped when the ball is in the infield and the fielder has possession of the ball. The fielder must hold the ball up or show he has given up the play by making no attempt to make a play. Runners must stop at the closest base.
8. If an attempt is made to throw the ball from one infielder to another infielder, NO runner may advance if there is an overthrow. On an overthrow by an outfielder, rule #6 applies.
9. Base stealing/leadoffs are not permitted. Runner is out if the runner left the base before the ball is hit.
10. Bunting is NOT allowed. On thrown bats, play will be called automatically dead, and counts as a swing. On third thrown bat of by same player during same "at bat", an automatic out is called.
11. The four outfielders must be positioned 15 feet behind the baseline prior to the ball being put in play.
12. First and third basemen shall start each play no further than ten feet from their base. Shortstop and second baseman must be no closer toward home plate than their base paths. On a pitched ball, the pitcher must start the play on either the first or third base side of the pitching rubber and must be within 5 feet of the pitching rubber. On a ball hit off the tee, the pitcher must start the play in the regular pitching position, on the rubber.
13. Catchers must wear full facemask and chest protector, but don't have to be in the traditional catching position (they may be positioned further back towards backstop if they choose).
14. One Coach is allowed behind the catcher to help retrieve balls to speed up play.
15. The pitching coach must move off the playing field into foul territory when a batter hits the ball off the tee.
16. a) On ANY ball hit off the tee, the batter and/or runners may advance no more than one base. The intent of this rule is to provide an incentive for players to hit pitches instead of off the tee.
b) If an attempt is made to throw the ball from one infielder to another infielder, runners may advance one base, at risk, on an overthrow. However, after the first such overthrow on a given play, runners may not advance, regardless of what happens to the ball. This rule applies only when the batter hits a pitch. On balls hit off the tee, rule #16a applies. Example: The batter hits a pitched ball to third base. The third baseman throws the ball to first base and overthrows first base. In this case, the batter/runner may attempt to go to second base, at risk. If a fielder retrieves the overthrown ball and overthrows second base to get the batter/runner out, the batter/runner may NOT continue to third base.
17. Mercy Run Rule: a) 6 inning game: 15 runs after 3 complete, 8 runs after 4 complete.

7U & 8U Coach Pitch

1. The batter is out after six (6) pitches or three (3) strikes at bat. If a foul ball occurs on the 6th pitch or third swing then the batter gets another pitch, until the ball is hit in fair territory or it is swinging strike. If the batter doesn't swing on the 6th pitch or additional pitches due to foul tips then it is considered a strike and the batter is out.

2. No coaches are allowed in the field when playing defense, except for the pitching coach. No coach can be behind the catcher during play. Defensive coaches may coach from their side of field in foul territory near their dugout and they must stay out of the way of the players.

Pitching Coach: The defensive pitcher must start each play on either the first or third base side of the pitching rubber and must be within 5 feet of the pitching rubber. The coach cannot field the ball once the ball is in play. The pitching coach is not allowed to coach in any capacity while his/her team is in offense. This includes but is not limited to coaching the batter and/or base runners. The pitching coach may not relay information through another coach that is deemed "coaching". When the ball is put in play the pitching coach must make every effort to stay out of the way and not interfere with defensive play on the field in any way. The pitching coach needs to get off the infield if the ball is hit into the outfield. He/she may go behind home plate to get the bat out of the way of the catcher and runners. A pitching coach that is not following these guidelines, should first be issued a warning by the umpire. If it continues then the umpire is to order the pitching coach to be removed from the mound for the remainder of the game, and an alternate coach must assume the pitching duties. If the problem persists in future games the pitching coach may be banned from pitching in future games by the Board.

3. There shall be at least 8 players on the field always and each player shall be in a regular baseball position. The game may be played with ten defensive players provided the tenth player is positioned in the outfield.

4. **Umpires shall call "Time" after every play and declare the ball dead. "Time" shall be called as soon as the lead runner is not attempting to advance AND an infielder has control of the ball. "Time" does not have to be called by the defense for this rule. Comment: When a runner stands off a base and "jukes" or "feints" back and forth, this is to be interpreted as "not attempting to advance" and "Time" shall be called.**

5. Base stealing and leadoffs are not permitted. The runner is out if the runner left the base before the ball is hit. Bunting is NOT allowed.

6. First and third basemen shall start each play no closer than ten (10) feet from their base. Shortstop and second baseman must be no closer toward home plate than their base paths. Infielders must start play within the area marked as the infield. No outfielder may start play in the infield area.

7. If a hit ball hits the pitching coach before being touched by a player, then the play is dead and a pitch is counted for the batter as a foul ball. If the coach hits the ball and it is deemed intentional by the umpire then the batter is out.

8. The definition of an infield is the area around the bases that the umpire deems to be his/her idea of an infield. Example on fields that have the bases cut out and a dirt apron the infield is the where the dirt starts and the outfield grass begins. On fields that are all grass, the infield is either the base paths or the extended area from that towards the outfield that the umpire has decided is where they will call an infield. Ask them at the coaches meeting before the game or risk not knowing.

9. A team may opt to use a courtesy runner for catcher of record only at any time. The courtesy runner shall be the player making the last batted out. If no batted outs have been recorded yet in the game (1st inning), the courtesy runner shall be the last listed player on the line-up. The intent of the rule is for speeding up play and not for inserting a pinch runner into the game.

10. A team may choose to intentionally walk a batter only once per game by announcing to "put them on" to the home plate umpire.

11. Mercy Run Rule: a) 6 inning game: 15 runs after 3 complete, 8 runs after 4 complete.

9U-18U Leagues

1. Runners may lead off and may also steal bases.

2. Balks are called. No warnings.

3. Third Strike: Batters can advance to first base when the catcher drops or misses a third strike. Third strike rule conforms to official baseball rules.

4. A team may opt to use a courtesy runner for pitcher or catcher of record at any time. The courtesy runner shall be the player making the last batted out. If no batted outs have been recorded yet in the game (1st inning), the courtesy runner shall be the last listed player on the line-up. The intent of the rule is for speeding up play and not for inserting a pinch runner into the game.

5. (If a Division does not have enough teams to “make”, then those teams will be merged with the Division that did “make”. If neither Division has enough to “make”, all teams will be merged into an “Open Division”)

6. Batters in the 15U/16U or 17U/18U League must use a bat with no greater than a negative three (-3) ounce drop.

7. Mercy Run Rule: a) 6 inning game (9U & 10U only): 15 runs after 3 complete, 8 runs after 4 complete. b) 7 inning games (11U & Older): 15 runs after 3 complete innings, 12 runs after 4 complete innings, 8 runs after 5 complete innings.

End of Season Standings

If all teams in the league have completed all games on their schedules as weather permits, the following rules will apply:

1. The number of games played will be determined by the smallest number of games played by all teams within the league. The exception to this rule is if the team(s) that holds the smallest number of games played has a record that will have no bearing on the top 3 standings. If this situation occurs, the number of games counted will be determined by the next smallest number of games played by a team that influences the final top 3 standings. The number of games played in a Division will be determined by the Prime Director.

2. The games to be included in the final standings will be based on the order the games were played during the season and **NOT** the original schedule.

3. Top 4 teams based on record will be determined.

4. In the event of a tie based on final season records, the following tie breaker rules will apply:

- Head to Head runs allowed in the games against one another.
- Head to Head runs scored in the games against one another.
- Total runs allowed in the entire season.
- Total runs scored in the entire season.
- Coin flip

League Playoffs

1. Only players that have participated in a game and are listed on the official USSSA Online Roster are eligible for league playoffs.

2. Seeding shall be determined by final regular season standings.

3. The top four (4) teams in each division shall advance to the playoff bracket.

4. Semifinal game: Seed 1 vs Seed 4. Seed 2 vs Seed 3.

5. High seed = home team

6. The winners of the semifinal games will advance to winners’ bracket to play in championship game (**add 15 minutes to game time**).

7. The losers of the semifinal games will advance to losers’ bracket game to play for third place.

8. League rules including Pitching Rules are in effect except for runs per inning limit removed from all ages except 8U and younger.

Parent Code of Conduct

1. Talk about the other kids on the team indeed, on both teams, in the same manner you would want other parents to talk about your child. This is the golden rule applied to sports. Watching kids' sports tends to be a social affair. When you are making conversation on the sideline with your friends and neighbors, think about what you are saying before you say it. To be on the safe side, only voice praise for the other children. That way, you will never unintentionally hurt a player’s feelings or confidence.

2. Remember that coaches are usually volunteers who are sacrificing their own time to teach baseball skills to your child. So, give them a well-deserved salute, especially when their team has not fared well that day.

3. Do not hesitate to give the umpires or other officials a pat on the back, either. As you might have guessed umpires are people too. They like it when parents and fans acknowledge their on-field efforts.

4. Remind your child that it is the effort that counts. We know all players want to win. That's a given. Be prepared to cushion your child's disappointment after a loss by pointing out that he or she played hard and put forth a tremendous effort.
5. Avoid the post-game analysis. When the game is over and your child climbs back into your car, avoid at all cost the detailed, excruciating, post-game analysis of everything he or she did right or wrong. Just let your child chill out, savor the fun of having played, and relax. The absolute worst time for "friendly criticism" is immediately after the game.
6. Smile, a lot. Kids' sports are about having fun. Because children take their behavioral cues from you, try at least to look like you are enjoying yourself.
7. If you are not a "good sport" at the games, the players will not be either. This should be self-evident. If you set a pattern of being a sideline loudmouth, who likes to yell and scream at the umpire, coach or opposing team, do not be surprised when your children start copying your behavior. You will have only yourself to blame.
8. Take time to learn the rules of the game.
9. If you must make noise at the games, shout only praise and encouragement. There's never any place for derogatory, snide or sarcastic comments at youth sports.
10. Above all, be there for your child. Support them, praise them, and let them know you can always be counted on for unconditional love, regardless of the final score.

Player Code of Conduct

1. I will encourage good sportsmanship from fellow players, coaches, and parents at every game and practice by demonstrating good sportsmanship.
2. I will attend every practice and game that I can, and will notify my coach if I cannot.
3. I will do my best to listen and learn from my coaches.
4. I will expect to receive a fair and equal amount of playing time.
5. I will treat my coaches, other players, officials and fans with respect regardless of race, sex, creed, or abilities and I will expect to be treated accordingly.
6. I deserve to have fun during my baseball experience and will alert my parents and coaches if it stops being fun!
7. I will encourage my parents to be involved with my team in some capacity because it is important to me.
8. I will remember that youth baseball is an opportunity to learn and have fun.

Coach Code of Conduct

1. I promise to treat everyone abiding appropriate Prime / USSSA rules, policies, and in compliance with the spirit of Prime's Mission Statement, regardless of gender, ethnic background, color, sexual orientation, religion, political belief or economic status. I will display control, respect, dignity and professionalism to all involved in Prime (players, coaches, opponents, umpires, administrators, parents, and spectators).
2. I will direct comments at the performance rather than the person. I promise to be constructive in my criticisms and to direct comments, observations and referrals, to the relevant individuals; to avoid gossip, innuendo and malicious comments. I will refrain from any form of personal abuse towards players and others, including verbal, physical and emotional abuse.
3. **I will consistently display high personal standards and project a favorable image of Prime.**
4. I will not engage in public criticism of fellow coaches. I promise to respect the efforts of appointed and elected representatives of Prime.
5. Use of drugs, alcohol and tobacco products is strictly prohibited while engaging in any Prime activity. I will never advocate or condone the use of drugs or other banned performance enhancing substances.
6. Use of profane, insulting, harassing or otherwise offensive language while coaching is grounds for game ejection with subsequent infraction resulting in dismissal from Prime. I will not tolerate use of profane language or player taunts towards opposing team by my players, parents, spectators or assistant coaches.
7. I will seek continual improvement of my coaching techniques through available coach education materials and seminars.
8. I promise to treat opponents, umpires and Prime officials with respect, both in victory and defeat and encourage athletes to act accordingly. I agree to adhere to all Prime policies and procedures.

9. I promise to communicate with all players and parents or legal guardians regarding my coaching style, philosophy, position assignment decisions and any team activities outside practices or games. I will stress parental involvement in improving their child's baseball skills.
10. I will strive to ensure the safety of the players with whom I work; at practice and during the game.
11. I will be knowledgeable about the Prime, USSSA Rules and American Baseball rules, providing instruction to players and parents.
12. I acknowledge I must be aware of the academic pressures placed on student athletes and conduct practices and games in a manner to allow academic success.
13. I will do everything possible to make certain that no one is allowed on the practice or playing fields that are not listed on the official Prime "Approved To Coach" list.

I understand that if I violate this Code of Conduct I will be subject to a range of consequences, up to and including being prohibited from coaching in Prime as ruled by The Prime Director. Any Board Member, Committee Member, Prime Director or On Duty Umpire can remove any coach, player, parent or spectator that acts in an inappropriate manner from the baseball facility.

Team Classifications

The USSSA baseball program was founded on and has grown by the merit of its multiple classification system. USSSA offers five baseball classifications (Major, AAA, AA, A, All-Star) but not all competitive classifications are available in all age divisions. The higher the classification, the higher the level of play. USSSA tries to classify a team and they are required to play in the appropriate classification which best matches their ABILITY. Below is a "Rule of Thumb" on the USSSA Classification breakdown.

Team classifications will be determined by the USSSA system prior to season starting at time of schedule creation.

Major- The Major classification consists of the top 10% teams in the state; the teams should be pursuing the Elite 32 World Series. These teams have achieved the highest classification in their age group in the USSSA system.

AAA- The AAA classification consist of the next 30% of the teams in the state and is for teams which cannot attain qualification at the Major level. These teams are usually very established teams that have shown a lot of success in tournament play at the AA level. These teams have demonstrated an ability to consistently win at the AA level.

AA- The AA classification consist of the next 30% of teams in the state and is designed for teams that cannot attain qualification at the AAA class. The AA class is the lowest class for select teams to start at.

A- The A class consist Rec "drafted" teams only.

All Star- The All-Star classification is used for USSSA Sanctioned Rec "A" League All-Star teams only.

Division Breakdowns

"AA", "division is only available to teams that are classified as "AA" in their age group.

"Open" division is a combination of AA, AAA, Major teams combined to make the division.

Prime reserves the right to move a AAA and/or Major class team to an older age group in order to level the playing field without notice.

- These divisions are the most competitive divisions
- Players are chosen by each individual coach; There will be no drafted players added to these teams
- These teams are not eligible to play as a USSSA "A" or recreational tournament team.
- Teams provide their own uniforms.
- Teams provide their own team insurance.
- Team practices in the AA and Open Divisions are not regulated and can practice wherever and whenever they choose.

Please note that not all divisions make every season. Division breakdown is completely dependent on participation levels. Any Division with fewer than four (4) teams registered, will be merged with another division as seen fit by The Prime Director. The Prime Director will make every effort to make Division assignments to the best of their ability. Coaches are expected to play within the appropriate division, however Prime Director reserves the right to reassign a team to a different division as it deems appropriate.

Playing Up

For a player to be eligible to play up, the following guidelines must be met:

1. Please realize that Prime does not recommend that they play up in age group. They do so at their own risk. They must be protected by the Head Coach on a team.

2. No team may play up more than one combined age level without permission of the Prime Director.

3. Pure aged leagues will be available based on the number of registered teams within that age group.

Example: If only (2) 14U teams register, then the highest level (if possible) 13U and 14U teams will be combined into a single league. It will be at the discretion of the Prime Director to join Age Leagues when needed.

NOTE: No player is eligible to play down.

Safety Policy

Safety is everyone's job. If you have a cell phone please bring it to the game to contact emergency personnel.

Prevention is the key to no accidents. Report all hazardous conditions to your Prime Director or Committee

Member immediately. Don't play on a field that is not safe or with unsafe equipment. Ensure all players are fully equipped always, especially catchers and batters. Check your own team's equipment often.

1. Speed limit is 5 mph in roadways and parking lots while attending any Prime function. Please look out for small children around parked cars.

2. No alcohol allowed in any parking lot, field or common area within any facility field.

3. No playing in parking lots at any time.

4. No playing on or around any field equipment.

5. **No smoking** on premises.

6. No profanity.

7. No swinging bats or throwing baseballs at any time within the walkways or common areas of facility fields.

8. No throwing or hitting balls against dugouts or backstops. Catchers must be used for all batting practice sessions.

9. No throwing rocks, dirt or any object in the common areas of facility fields.

10. Be alert around batter on deck who is practice swinging.

11. **Observe all posted signs.**

12. Players and spectators must be alert for foul balls and stray throws.

13. During games players must remain in the dugout in an orderly fashion.

14. After each game, each team must clean up trash in the dugout and around the stands.

15. No **children under the age of 16** are permitted in the **concession stand**, no exceptions.

16. No transportation items (other than stroller and wheelchairs) are allowed on the facility premises. This includes, but not limited to, skateboards, scooters, roller skates, Heelys, bikes, rollerblades, or any other type of board that can leave a person's body.

17. Bring Water to Games & Practice: Regardless of the weather; it's very important that you bring water to all the games and practices. Dehydration is serious and it can make your player very sick very quickly. Don't wait until the game to drink water. Drink plenty of water all the time to keep you hydrated all the time.

18. Stretching: Be sure to stretch all muscle groups before and after a workout. The one most important exercise you can use. You can prevent most pulls and strains by keeping muscles loose and flexible.

Communicable Disease Procedures

1. Bleeding must be stopped, the open wound covered and the uniform changed if there is blood on it before the player may continue to participate.
 2. Routinely use gloves to prevent mucous membrane exposure when contact with blood or other bodily fluids are anticipated.
 3. Wash hands and other skin surface if contaminated with blood immediately.
 4. Clean all blood contaminated surfaces and equipment.
 5. Coaches, spectators, volunteers with open wound should refrain from all direct contact until condition is resolved.
 6. Follow accepted guidelines in the immediate control of bleeding and disposal when handling body dressings, mouth guards and other articles containing body fluids.
 7. Remember: (PRICES) PROTECTION, REST, ICE, COMPRESSION, ELEVATION and SUPPORT.
- Failure to comply with any policy or rule may result in expulsion from Prime fields.**

Notes:

These rules, policies and procedures are provided to assist in the effective and efficient management of Prime Baseball. A thorough understanding of these items and issues discussed herein is recommended for all individuals, youth and adult, who participate in Prime or related activities. The statement, interpretation and application of these rules are the domain and responsibility of Prime Baseball.