

13U & Up GHVBL Rules

In General, GHVBL adheres to National Federation of High School Rules in all 60'/90' Games – with some differences to simplify game management, promote player safety, and encourage coaching flexibility (2/15/24 Updates)

Sportsmanship Rules

All GHVBL participants (Players, Coaches, Umpires, Spectators) must follow the GHVBL Code of Conduct (COC). Our expectations are clear and must be adhered to by all participants. Not every game situation is covered in the COC, so some game situations fall into “general sportsmanship” – For example, No Heckling of Pitchers is permitted. Team is welcome to cheer on their players in a positive tone, but there shall be no outbursts when a pitcher starts their windup to distract or gain an advantage.

<https://resources.ghvbl.com/forms/GHVBL-Code-of-Conduct.pdf>

Game Day Logistics

Game Balls – Each team (Home & Away) must supply new game balls (2 or more) each game. After that, teams alternate providing umpires with new baseballs starting with the away team. GHVBL provides league logo & approved Baden GHVBL-HS (High Seam) & GHVBL-LS (Low Seam) baseballs for use. We may approve additional models of cushioned cork baseballs. (No rubber or solid cork balls are permitted in game play)

Umpires – Umpires are paid at the pregame meeting. Team split the cost of umpire(s). For updated rates, please refer to the following link – <https://www.ghvbl.com/umpires/>

Single Games or Doubleheaders – Inability to field 8 players for a game shall result in forfeit. You may play with at least 8.

Game Time Limits – 7 inning games – Inning does not start after 2:20 hours of play (clock starts at first pitch). Make good judgment – tie game at 2:20 is ump discretion. 9 inning games – Inning does not start after 2:45 hours of play. Make good judgment – tie game at 2:45 is ump discretion. **Time Limit Exception** – In limited cases, some field complexes have time limits and/or tight scheduling with back-to-back games. Home team is expected to let the opponent know in advance of any unique time constraints – and should be confirmed at the pre-game meeting with the umpire.

Coaching staffs – may consist of a Head Coach, Assistant Coach, Scorekeeper, & One Bench Coach for a total of no more than 4 coaches. There should never be more than 4 coaches in the bench area.

Base Coaches – Not allowed to touch player when ball is in play. At umpire discretion – batter runner may be directed back to base OR called out.

Pitching Distance (11U & 12U): 60'6" – Bases Distance (11U & 12U): 90'

Doubleheaders – Each team will be home one game. The host team will have a choice of which dugout they will use regardless of which team arrives at the field first.

Forecast for Rain – HOST team always makes the call – Most importantly – please contact opposing coaches and call umpires DIRECTLY in event of cancellation. Secondly, Secondly, update your team portal & inform our umpire coordinator Tom Kienzle (tom@ebuaumpires.com) – Please make a call at least two hours before game time – if game is called after the umpire travels to the game – they are entitled one-half game fee. After first pitch is thrown, the responsibility shifts to the UMPIRE for any/all cancellations. In the case of rainout – please contact opposing coach to make-up game asap – and please inform league email, umpire director, and both teams must agree on time/place. Rain shortened – Games are considered official after 5 full (4 ½ if home team is ahead in 13U+) – games are not suspended in regular season (only in playoffs before a game is official)

IMPORTANT – Game Cancellation Policy (non-weather related) – when a game must be canceled, we prefer BOTH teams to inform the league to give our umpire assignor Tom Kienzle enough time to redeploy the umpire crew. Please inform the league email (theghvbl@gmail.com) and Tom (tom@ebuaumpires.com) AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. If the cancellation occurs within 24 hours of game time – canceling team is subject to forfeit & must pay the umpire(s) FULL FARE if we can not reassign for the game (or games if a doubleheader). Remember, we have great umpires that depend on our league for their income. It is not fair to leave them hanging.

Darkness or weather shortened games – Official games (4 innings complete in 6 inning games) & (5 innings complete in 7 inning games) are final. Unofficial games (not yet reaching the above length) are suspended and played the next day (only in the playoffs meaning we do not suspend games in the regular season). With away team leading or tie game, and home team does not complete their home at bat, game reverts back to the last completed inning, if that results in an official game – game is final. With home team leading in a shortened game, home team is not required to complete their at bat for the game to be final.

Protesting Games – The protesting manager must notify the home plate umpire of a protest before the next pitch is thrown. The umpire must note the point of protest in the scorebook and/or note exact moment of the protesting manager and then notify the umpire coordinator after the game via email. Protesting manager must email league within 24 hours – theghvbl@gmail.com with the game situation, the rule being protested, and the teams and umpires involved. You may not protest a judgment call by an umpire, the only situation where protests are considered are where a rule is incorrectly interpreted.

Safety Rules

Helmet – Any player at-bat, on the bases, or in the coaching boxes must wear a double ear-flapped helmet.

On Deck Warm Up – Open area on deck batters allowed on 60/90 fields only. Please use caution and safety.

Cleats & Spikes – Plastic Molded or Metal Spikes are fine on 60/90 fields. Make note on some turf fields where sneakers or turf shoes are required.

Catcher Safety – An extended “dangling” throat protector is considered a required part of the catcher’s mask. Hockey-style catcher’s masks with built-in extended throat protection are approved and do not require an extended “dangling” throat protector. The catcher’s mask shall not have a chrome or mirror-like surface. The catcher’s helmet and mask combination shall meet the NOCSAE standard which includes having full ear protection with dual ear flaps. The skull cap and mask combination does not meet the NOCSAE standard nor does it provide full ear protection with dual ear flaps and is not permitted in GHVBL.

Double Bag @ First Base – Games may be played with or without the double bag at first. If a field has a double base, all infield outs runner must touch the orange (outside) base and the first baseman must be in contact with the white part of the base when a play is being made. If there is a base hit the runner can touch either base.

Baserunning – GHVBL is a slide or “best attempt to avoid contact league” – Forceful, purposeful collisions are grounds for immediate ejection. Players are not required to slide into all bases, if they are avoiding contact. No headfirst sliding into a base on 46/60 fields although you may slide headfirst BACK to a bag. If a play is being made he may go in standing but must make every effort to avoid contact. Batter runner does not lay claim to the baseline – batter runner must avoid any collision (may veer out of baseline to avoid collision – and will not be penalized for going out of the baseline to avoid contact with defensive player in baseline) – this is an umpire judgment call.

Blocking Bases or Home Plate – Obstruction shall be called if a runner does not have access to the bag/plate. The runner could/will be awarded 1 base. A defensive player cannot block a base without the ball.

Pitcher Safety – GHVBL has adopted the Pitch Smart Compliance Program. Teams are required to adhere to the very specific documented pitching limits in the chart following. This is an ENFORCED RULE. Pitch limits and “Daily Max” are **NOT HARD STOPS** – meaning the **pitcher MAY finish the batter**. Teams should communicate between innings – to properly document pitch counts. In areas of disagreement – HOME TEAM owns OFFICIAL PITCH COUNT. Pitch Smart is a safety rule, so ALL PITCHING, regardless of league is relevant. Meaning a pitcher’s daily limit would include pitching in a local rec game, in addition to the GHVBL game the same day.

GHVBL PITCHSMART RULES (no hardstop may complete batter as of 2024)

AGE	DAILY MAX	REQUIRED CALENDAR DAYS REST & NUMBER OF PITCHES					
(Division)	(May Complete Batter)	0 Days	1 Days	2 Days	3 Days	4 Days	5 Days
7U & 8U	50	1-20	21-35	36-50	N/A	N/A	N/A
9U & 10U	75	1-20	21-35	36-50	51-65	66+	N/A
11U & 12U	85	1-20	21-35	36-50	51-65	66+	N/A
13U & 14U	95	1-20	21-35	36-50	51-65	66+	N/A
15U & 16U	95	1-30	31-45	46-60	61-75	76+	N/A
VARSITY	105	1-30	31-45	46-60	61-80	81+	N/A
COLLEGE	120	1-30	31-45	46-60	61-80	81-105	106+
9U EXAMPLE	45 PITCHES WEDNESDAY	THU = 0	FRI = 1	SAT = 2	SUN = 3	MON = 4	TUE = 5
12U EXAMPLE	76 PITCHES WEDNESDAY	THU = 0	FRI = 1	SAT = 2	SUN = 3	MON = 4	TUE = 5

Pitcher Reentry – On 60/90 fields & games, a pitcher once removed MAY RETURN TO THE MOUND in the same game, but this is not suggested or a best practice. Also not encouraged, but a pitcher may pitch in multiple games in a day as long as they are under their daily pitch limit.

Thunder & Lightning Policy – Thunder and lightning necessitates that games be suspended. The occurrence of thunder and/or lightning is not subject to interpretation or discussion - thunder is thunder, lightning is lightning. With any weather in the forecast, please set up a plan for shelter prior to the start of a game. When thunder is heard and/or when lightning is seen, the following procedures should be adhered to:

“Suspend play and direct participants to go to shelter, a building normally occupied by the public or if a building is unavailable, participants should go inside a vehicle with a solid metal top (e.g. bus, van, car). Do not permit people to stand under or near a tree; and have all stay away from poles, antennas, towers and underground watering systems. After thunder and/or lightning have left the area, wait 30 minutes after the last boom is heard or strike is seen before resuming the game.”

Seasonal Rules

Rosters – Your age on APRIL 30th of the current year is your baseball age for the entire Spring & Summer seasons – teams “move up in the Fall”. Rosters are limited to 20. A player may play “up” to help a team in the event that the older age group is in need of a player short of players. A player may NOT play on two teams in the same division. Rosters must be submitted prior to the season. We

encourage expanded rosters to avoid any forfeit. We may allow exceptions to this rule in order to avoid a forfeit. Teams accepted on basis of driving parity for each division. Coaches are encouraged to place teams in appropriate division based on results in prior seasons and updated team make-up.

Regular Season Schedule – Teams must work together to schedule regular season games at the preseason scheduling meeting (virtual or in-person). Teams MAY schedule as many games as they like – BUT FIRST 12 COMPLETED GAMES – Spring/Fall (16 IN SUMMER) count in the Playoff Seeding Standings.

Game Play Rules

Offensive Lineup – A team may bat 9 players, the entire lineup/roster or anything in-between. Once the number of batters is determined, it must remain for the entire game. No automatic outs recorded unless an ejected player's turn comes up and there are no subs available. In the event a team has 8 players, the 9th position in the order will be recorded as an automatic out. TEAMS MAY PLAY WITH 8 PLAYERS

Once a substitution bats or runs for a player, the sub and the original starter are locked into that batting position – players may be interchangeable in this situation, they are “married” in that spot in the order. Either one may bat or run in that position ONLY and are interchangeable for the game – no limit on re-entry. If a player is removed due to injury (and skipped in the lineup – that player MAY NOT RETURN TO THE GAME)

Courtesy Runners / Speed-Up – With any # of outs, running for the catcher, pitcher OR INCOMING catcher, pitcher is allowed. However, it is not mandatory & is **not allowed DURING AN AT BAT**. Courtesy Runner must be last batted out.

Leading & Stealing – Real Baseball, full leading and stealing – no limits – head first slide is allowed on the 60/90 field.

Dropped third strike – is live ball with no runner on first base or with two outs. The batter may then attempt to reach first base and must be tagged or thrown out. With two outs and the bases loaded, the catcher who fails to catch the third strike may, upon picking up the ball, step on home plate for a force-out or make a throw to any other fielder. If at the time of the strike three pitch, first base is occupied with fewer than two outs, the batter is automatically out and cannot become a runner. On a drop 3rd strike with the safety first base, the fielder has the right to use the inside base. Since it is for safety, GHVBL allows the field to use that base on drop 3rd strike only.

Slap Bunt/Slashing - legal in 13U and above

Mercy Rule – A team trailing the leading team by 10 Runs after 5 FULL innings, (4 ½ with the home team ahead) shall concede defeat immediately. After 5th Inning – 10 runs after FULL inning – home team gets last licks.

Extra Inning Rules & Ties – All games in tie after 7 innings shall play one extra inning (8th) “straight up”, then inning 9 & 10 use California Rule (Last Batted out goes to second base & inning starts with ZERO OUTS). Game is TIE after 10 innings – Regulation games called due to darkness or weather related MAY end in a tie.

Defensive Lineup – Open & unlimited defensive substitution. Any player on the roster may play in any defensive position at any time, regardless of being in the batting order.

Catching/Pitching Restrictions – No restrictions on pitchers going to catch or catchers going to pitch

Balks & 3rd to 1st Pick Move – For Illegal pitch, balks, etc. No warnings unless both coaches agree at pregame meeting. No warnings in Play-offs. Fake to third – throw to first pick-off is allowed.

Coach trips to the Mound – 13U and above – HS Federation Rules – Coaches receive 3 free pitcher conferences for the game – removing a pitcher DOES NOT COUNT AS A PITCHER CONFERENCE.

Each team, when on defense, may be granted not more than three charged conferences during a seven-inning game, without penalty, to permit coaches or their non-playing representatives to confer with a defensive player or players. In an extra inning game, each team shall be permitted one charged conference each inning while on defense without penalty. The number of charged conferences permitted is not cumulative. A request for time for this purpose shall be made by a coach, player, substitute or an attendant. Time granted for an obviously incapacitated player shall not constitute a charged conference.

Bat Rules – 13U, 14U – Wood, USABat, or BBCOR (non-wood bats must have USABat or BBCOR stamp or label) 15U & Older – Wood or BBCOR only (non-wood bats must have USABat or BBCOR stamp or label) – **1.15 BPF NOT LEGAL** – For more information on GHVBL Bat Rules click link below:

<https://www.ghvbl.com/bat-rules/>

Post-Season Rules

Postseason Eligibility (Team) – Team must play 6 games (Spring/Fall) or 8 games (Summer) in order to be eligible for playoffs. ALL eligible teams are entered into the playoff tournament. Higher Seed has option of hitting first or second. Higher seed may host for first two rounds of playoffs.

Postseason Seeding – Based on a weighted point system for regular season games. First 12 (16 in SUMMER) complete games played count in playoff seeding standings. Additional games do not count in standings.

Postseason Eligibility (Players) – Each team member must play in at least 4 games (Spring/Fall) and 6 games (Summer) (FOR THE TEAM THEY ARE PLAYING WITH IN THE PLAYOFFS) to be eligible for participation in Post-Season Play. Rare exceptions made in situation of injury – contact league email

for league exception consideration. PLAYERS may not play playoffs for more than ONE TEAM in the same DIVISION.

Play-Off Extra Inning Rules – All playoff games in tie after regulation play ONE extra inning straight up. Starting with the second extra inning and forward until completion – play the California Rule.

Darkness or weather shortened games – Official games (4 innings complete in 6 inning games) & (5 innings complete in 7 inning games) are final. Unofficial games (not yet reaching the above length) are suspended and played the next day (only in the playoffs meaning we do not suspend games in the regular season). With away team leading, and home team does not complete their home at bat, game reverts back to the last completed inning, if that results in an official game – game is final. With home team leading in a shortened game, home team is not required to complete their at bat for the game to be final.

The GHVBL Playoffs are a single elimination tournament. Teams are expected to be ready to play on any day of the tournament. League guidance and expectations are given for playoff game days, please meet (or beat) guidance to keep the tournament moving forward. Playoff scheduling posturing (gamesmanship) is not tolerated and is grounds for removal from tourney. If you are participating in an outside tournament that conflicts with GHVBL playoffs – please do not participate in the playoffs.