



## IFPAA League Rules (Pinto - 9-year olds)



### Pinto Baseball - 9-year olds

**GENERAL:** This is the second and final year in the transition phase to full-scale baseball. By the end of the year, the kids will be playing youth league-style baseball, with only minor modifications. The kids will be pitching, bunting, stealing, and we will begin using a real baseball. Other concepts added or enhanced will include walks, hit batters, overthrows, live ball and development of position skills. 9-year-old baseball will have its disorganized moments as the kids try to master these new skills, but it is part of the process and we will try to minimize that potential. There are still many concepts that remain restricted from this phase of baseball which will come in later years – such as: taking leads, balks, passed balls, and the infield fly rule.

The goal this year is to continue to introduce and teach new skills to the kids, refining those introduced in the last few years, further increase their levels of awareness and responsibility within the game by again expanding the range of potential outcomes on the field and moderately turning up the competitive level another notch.

**FIELD:** The field dimensions for Pinto League consist of bases 60 feet apart. The pitching rubber is 46 feet from Home Plate. The home team is responsible for preparing the field for each game. This includes setting the bases, lining and raking the field, doing any general tidying up needed and making all decisions on field conditions due to weather. Halfway lines are used between 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> base, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> base, and 3<sup>rd</sup> base & home.

**EQUIPMENT:** Shirts and caps are provided by the league, with the kids able to keep both. Parents are asked to provide pants. The pants must be the standard issue black baseball pants with no stripes. Bats, helmets and catcher's equipment are provided in equipment bags issued to the managers. Balls will be provided to the managers by the league. We will be using a regular baseball, an AD 100-PB. The kids must bring their own gloves and baseball shoes, and may bring bats if they wish, but everything should be prominently marked. *STEEL-SPIKED SHOES ARE NOT PERMITTED*. All batting helmets are *REQUIRED* to have a facemask. No player will be allowed to bat without wearing a batting helmet with a facemask.

**PLAYERS:** There will be a standard infield of 6 players: First Base, Second Base, Shortstop, Third Base, Pitcher and Catcher. The outfield shall consist of four players. By using the fielding positions as described above, ten players should be on the field at all times.

However, since teams will sometimes have more than 10 players, it may be necessary to sit a child out each inning in the field. For example, on teams of eleven, six different players should sit out one inning. This bench rotation does not affect the batting order, everybody bats in regular turn. A related matter concerns position rotation. Each player must play a minimum of one full inning in the infield up to a maximum of five. Conversely, a player must play a minimum of one full inning in the outfield up to a maximum of five. The minimum one full inning in the infield and outfield must occur within the first four innings. A "sitting-out" inning may not be counted against any minimum requirements. In addition, a player may play a maximum of three full innings at any one position. When players are missing, it is acceptable to play with nine players, although a minimum of eight is required to have a regulation game.



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**CALLUPS:** No call-up may play any more innings in the infield, or in total than any regular player on the team, and must bat last in the lineup, unless someone shows up later. Pitching the call-up is prohibited. Managers must adhere to the IFPAA Handbook policy regarding call-ups.

**GAME:** The games will be six innings in duration. Each inning will end after three outs, or the entire lineup has batted. When two teams have different numbers of players, the smaller team will bat extra players to equal the lineup size of the larger team, if needed. In the sixth inning, three outs must be recorded. However, if the home team manager states to the umpire and the visiting team manager that it will be the last inning (other than the 6<sup>th</sup> inning) based on time, then three outs must be recorded. If the last inning is not clearly stated by the home team manager prior to the start of an inning (other than the 6<sup>th</sup>) then the inning will end when 3 out are recorded or batting through the lineup. Games should run no longer than two hours. NO GAME can run within fifteen minutes of the start of the next game. Any game reaching that point must be stopped immediately. A game halted during play for weather or time limit reasons will be considered complete if the losing team has batted at least four innings. Games called before this point can be rescheduled with the agreement of both managers. *NOTE: During the playoffs, no weather or time limits will be in effect. All games must be played to their logical conclusion.*

**RAIN OUTS:** If a game is called early, umpires must be notified at least 30 minutes prior to the start of the game. If the game is called after the umpires arrive at the field they will be paid full fee for the game. Prior to the game, home team managers make the decision on whether a game can be played. All efforts should be made to get games in. Once play begins, all decisions concerning weather, field conditions, and continued play rest with the umpires.

**LIGHTNING:** The official IFPAA rule on lightning is: If an umpire sees *any lightning* (bolt or flash) at *any distance*, play must be immediately stopped and all players must leave the field. Play may only resume after fifteen consecutive minutes free from lightning. The umpire will keep the official time.

**WARM-UP TIMES:** For first games of the day, the visiting team will have the field 30 to 15 minutes prior to game time, and the home team gets it from 15 minutes until game time. The team not on the field will have priority in the batting cage. For all other games, 5 minutes will be allowed per team, time permitting. If time is short, managers will split available pre-game time for warm-ups.

**BATTING:** With the children pitching from the start this year, each batter will bat until they either hit the ball, walk, get hit by a pitch or strike out. Pitches will be called by the Umpire. A strikeout is the same as in regular baseball - 3 strikes, swinging or called (fouls count up to 2). Walks will be awarded after the traditional 4 balls.

Intentional Walks are **PROHIBITED**. There is nothing wrong with pitching carefully to a batter, but nothing obvious should ever occur in these kinds of situations.

**BATTING ORDER:** The full lineup always bats. If a team bats out of order, and it is noticed during the inning, the team will re-bat from the point of the last "legal" batter, with the game situation duplicated from that point. If it is not noticed at that point, the game will proceed with the original lineup from the last batter in the inning. No out is recorded for batting out of order.



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**BAT THROWING:** A thrown bat results in a dead ball and all runners return to the base held at the time of the pitch. A **TEAM** warning will be issued. The pitch at the time of the violation is not counted and the batter resumes their at bat. All subsequent violations by that team will result in the batter being called out and all runners returning to the base occupied at the time of the pitch.

**BATTER'S BOX:** A form will be available at the field to outline the batter's box.

**BUNTING:** Bunting is allowed using all standard rules. If the batter hits the ball with one foot completely outside of the batter's box, they will be called out and all runners return to the base at the time of the pitch. Slug-bunting (also known by other names) is **PROHIBITED** for safety reasons. This is defined as squaring around to bunt and then stepping back and swinging away.

**BASERUNNING:** With no leads allowed, the runner must wait until the ball crosses the plate before leaving the base. The base runner should stay within the baseline. The only exceptions to this are to avoid a batted ball or fielder interference. The runner has the right of way at all times, except when a fielder is making a play. If a runner interferes with a fielder while playing the ball, the runner is out and play is stopped. If a runner runs out of the baseline to avoid a tag, he is out. If a batted ball hits the runner before it reaches an infielder, the ball is dead, the hit runner is out and no runners may score or advance unless forced.

Tagging up is allowed on any caught fly ball. Runners will be awarded extra bases when the ball goes out of play. Generally, the rule for a ball thrown out of play is two bases from when the ball was thrown and the runners' position on the field of play.

Base coaches may not physically interfere with any runner.

**AVOID CONTACT RULE:** A runner must make an attempt to avoid contact at any base if a play is being made or they are out. It is not a **MUST SLIDE** rule, but sliding is recommended.

Headfirst slides are prohibited, unless a runner is *returning* to a base. The intent in these instances is to encourage safety and avoid injuries or collision.

**STEALING:** Stealing will be introduced prior to the season during practices. Stealing will be allowed at the start of the season. When stealing, a runner may not leave the base until the pitch has crossed home plate. If a runner leaves the base before the pitch crosses the plate and is put out on the play, the out stands and no penalty for leaving early applies. If a runner leaves the base before the ball passes home plate, reaches the next base safely and the batter did not hit the ball, **ALL** runners will return to their starting bases. If a runner leaves the base before the ball passes home plate, reaches the next base safely and the batter hits the ball, **ALL** runners cannot advance any further than where forced by the batter turned runner.

**\*NOTE:** *There are three special modifications we use at this age to encourage the catcher to throw the ball and to prevent cheap runs. No runner may be awarded an extra base on an overthrow or error on a stolen base attempt, nor may any runner steal home. In addition, no runner may steal a base on an errant throw back to the pitcher, unless he is already in the act of stealing before the error.*



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**FIELDING:** Once the ball is put into play it is live. Play will stop when (a) a play has been made at a base and time has been called by the umpire; (b) the ball goes out of play on an overthrow and each runner is awarded the appropriate base; or (c) with the ball under the control of an infielder and time has been officially called by the umpire. Halfway lines will be used. The halfway line rule does not apply to base stealing - each stolen base attempt is allowed to run its course.

The Catcher will play behind Home Plate in the normal position for catching pitches. All male catchers must wear a cup **AT ALL TIMES**.

The Pitcher must start play from the pitching rubber. Infielders will play in the traditional positions. This is a large area and gives the manager some flexibility in placing players. Managers should position infielders to avoid obstruction of the runners.

The outfield consists of four fielders, and can be positioned by the manager. These players are under no restrictions as far as fielding balls or making throws. Although outfielders may, in rare circumstances, physically make a put out on a runner, players will be prevented from playing a short outfield position and trying to act as a fifth infielder. For this reason the outfielders must start each play 30 feet behind the bases. Since the ball is live, outfielders must get the ball back to the infield to make a play at a base or to hold the runners.

**PITCHING:** This is the age group that the children begin pitching the entire games. The pitching rubber is 46 feet from Home Plate. The Pitcher should throw from the rubber, although at this age, we will be flexible enough to allow a kid to be off of it a bit, as long as they are behind the rubber, but not in front of it.

A child is permitted to pitch 75 pitches per day adhering to the rest requirements outlined below **OR** a maximum of six innings in a week, whichever is reached first. The week of record runs from Monday to Sunday. For the purposes of record keeping, one pitch thrown constitutes an inning. No player may return to pitcher once removed during that game.

Innings at pitcher do count toward minimum infield requirements. This must be factored in when using a pitcher in the late innings. A partial inning at pitcher, while counted as a full inning for pitching purposes, is still only a partial inning defensively, and all players must still play one full inning in the infield.

A batter hit by the pitcher will take first base. If this happens twice in the same game, the pitcher must be removed.

### **Pitchers MUST adhere to the following rest requirements:**

66 or more pitches – pitcher is required to rest 4 calendar days before pitching again

51 to 65 pitches – pitcher is required to rest 3 calendar days before pitching again

36 to 50 pitches – pitcher is required to rest 2 calendar days before pitching again



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21 to 35 pitches – pitcher is required to rest 1 calendar day before pitching again

20 or less pitches – pitcher requires no days rest and may pitch again the next day

If a pitcher hits a pitch count limit while pitching to a batter, the pitcher is allowed to finish pitching to that batter only.

Each team's official scorekeeper or other pitch count designate will be responsible for tracking the number of pitches thrown per pitcher. The scorekeeper or other pitch count designate from each team should meet every inning to confirm the pitch counts. The umpire does not keep the pitch count, but they will enforce the rules when the pitch count is known.

**Note: A pitcher who delivers 41 or more pitches in a game cannot play the position of catcher for the remainder of that day.**

**UMPIRING:** We will have paid umpires from the association. These will usually be older IFPAA players aged 12 and up in training, accompanied by an older player or parent. Understand that they are learning their craft and IFPAA needs them to develop into seasoned umpires down the road.

There should never be an argument with the Umpire, his word stands. If there is a legitimate disagreement over a play with everyone concerned, including the Umpire, it should be discussed in a mature manner.

Judgment calls are FINAL and no manager may discuss them. A rules question can be discussed by the MANAGER asking for "time" and speaking with the umpire who made the call. The Manager is the only adult who may discuss a play with an umpire. All managers are responsible for the conduct of their team's fans.

Rudeness or profanities will not be tolerated. We do not want to set such examples for the kids. **BE REASONABLE.**