



Hamilton and District Baseball

Association

2026 House League Interlock

Rules Package

Table of Contents

HDBA House League Rules

HDBA Interlock House League Rules	4
Interpretation	4
Overage, Sitting, Rep/Elite Players	4
Pitching	4
Catching	5
Minimum Number of Players	5
Head First Slides	5
Fair Play	5
Failure to Field a Team	5
Call Ups	6
Pitching Distances	6
Double Headers	6
Coaches Uniforms	6
Players Uniforms	6
Players Protection (jock or jill)	6
Bats	6
Discipline	6
Conduct While Under Suspension	7
Lightning	7

9U (Rookie) Rules

General Rules	8
Diamond Layout	8
Pitching Machine	8
Game Length	8
Mercy Rule	9
Playing Rules (Defensive)	9
Playing Rules (Offensive)	9
Local Association Rules	10
Rules Table A	11

Hamilton & District Baseball Association

HDBA Interlock House League Rules:

1. These rules govern HDBA House League Season, Tournament and City Championship games subject to any additional specific rules set out for tournaments and City Championships.
For any team to be eligible to play in the Mid-Summer Classic or the City Championships, rosters for house league teams must be submitted to the HDBA Registrar by no later than **June 15th of the current playing season**.
2. The Official Rules of Baseball and Ontario Baseball Association rules shall apply, except where modified by these rules.
3. The interpretation and application of these rules shall apply as follows:
 - a. Protests shall not be made during season series play.
 - b. Protests may be made during tournament and City Championship series play
 - c. For Tournament Play:
 - i) At the time of an umpires ruling and before the next ensuing play has begun, the coach of an affected team may verbally request of the tournament convener an interpretation of these rules and/or appeal the ruling of an umpire related to these rules, and
 - ii) The tournament convener shall render an interpretation immediately following the request; and
 - iii) Any interpretation shall take effect at the time of appeal.
4.
 - 4.1 To promote, as far as possible, fair and equal playing time for each player, the following shall apply:
 - a. Overage players (1 year only) shall not play the position of pitcher or catcher; and the coach must inform the opposing team who are the overage players. Overage 18U (Midget) players will be allowed only under special circumstances and only with the express permission of the HDBA President.
 - i. Penalty for use of an illegal overage player is ejection of the coach and player from the game.
 - b. All players appearing and able to play at any game shall be included in the batting line-up; and
 - c. An open re-entry rule shall be used each inning defined by the following:
 - i. Players on the bench for any inning shall be on the field for the next ensuing inning; and
 - ii. No player shall sit out a second inning if any other player has not already sat out an inning and it shall follow that no player shall sit out a third inning if any other player has not already sat out two innings, and so on subject to game completion.
 - iii. No player may be substituted from the bench mid inning except in case of injury.
 - d. Players on non-recognized teams, Elite teams (e.g. PBLO), and Rep rosters, are ineligible for house league play. Players on Rep rosters as Associate Players (AP) are eligible for house league play.
 - 4.2 Pitching
 - a. Substitute pitchers during a defensive inning must come from the field.
 - b. Players may play in the pitching position their entire allotment of innings per game (must be consecutively), as noted in Table A attached without being deemed in contravention of rule 4.1c ii
 - c. One (1) pitch in any inning shall be sufficient to constitute an inning pitched for any player
 - d. The player as pitcher must sit out any time prior to their pitching performance, or immediately after.
 - e. These limits are in place for the protection and wellbeing of the player. All infractions of this rule are to be reported to the Chairman of the HDBA Discipline Committee, the Disciplinary Committee will review each infraction and impose such penalties, as it deems appropriate. Penalties can include, but are not limited to, suspension and/or removal of the team manager.
 - f. Should a pitching infraction occur during a Mid-Summer Classic or League Championship Series
 - i. The tournament convener has the authority to impose penalties as mentioned in (4.2.d) above on behalf of the HDBA Disciplinary Committee.

Hamilton & District Baseball Association

- ii. The game is to be deemed a forfeit, and a score of zero runs will be recorded for offending team, and a score of one run per scheduled inning will be recorded for the non-offending team (ie, 9U (Rookie) 5, 11U (Mosquito) 6, 13U (Peewee) -18U (Midget) 7). All runs scored will be recorded as occurring in the first inning played.
- iii. The tournament convenor will report all infractions and penalties imposed to the Chair of the Discipline Committee.
- g. Players may play in the catching position subject to the **fair play rules** (Rules 4 and 5), and the following max's:
 - i. three (3) not necessarily consecutive innings for 11U (Mosquito); and
 - ii. four (4) not necessarily consecutive innings for 13U (Peewee); and
 - iii. no max. for 15U (Bantam) and 18U (Midget).

4.3 Teams shall play with a minimum of:

- a. Eight (8) players during an interlock season series game; and where a team plays with eight (8) players there shall not be an automatic out for the ninth (9th) batting position; and
- b. Nine (9) players during Tournament play.

4.4 In the 11U (Mosquito), 13U (Peewee) and 15U (Bantam) division all players must play a minimum of one complete inning in the infield and a minimum of one complete inning in the outfield.

4.5 At 11U (Mosquito) runner on third may not steal home on a wild pitch or passed ball until the next baseball play

*A **play or attempted play** is interpreted as a legitimate effort by a defensive player who has possession of the ball to actually retire a runner. This may include an actual attempt to tag a runner, a fielder running toward a base with the ball in an attempt to force or tag a runner, or actually throwing to another defensive player in an attempt to retire a runner. (The fact that the runner is not out is not relevant.) A fake or a feint to throw shall not be deemed a play or an attempted play.*

4.6 Absolutely no head first slides unless returning to a base. If a head first slide does occur the runner will be called out and the ball will be dead.

4.7 Runners are instructed to either slide or attempt to avoid making contact with a fielder. A player who maliciously runs into another player is to be declared out (unless they have scored prior to committing the infraction) and is to be automatically ejected (whether or not declared out).

5. Any player not included in the line-up and appearing before the completion of the game may join the game and be placed at the end of the existing batting line-up;

- a. From the point where a player joins the game in accordance with 5, the requirements of article 4 shall apply in respect of that player from that point forward. Joining the game late does not constitute "sitting".
- b. Coaches must notify the umpire at the time they become aware of any improper adherence to any fair play rules (Rules 4 and 5). It shall be at the discretion of the umpire to determine if any competitive advantage has been gained by the team failing to meet the fair play rules, and in such cases to restart the game from the point that proper fair play was affected before the start of the next inning.

6. Game length, all regular season house league games are to be 2 hours from scheduled start time. After which time no new inning may begin. See table A attached for number of innings for each division.

7. There shall be a "mercy rule":

- a. Five (5) runs per inning max. score (regardless of what last batter does).
- b. **Except that there shall be no limit on runs scored in the final regularly scheduled inning. (6th inning for 11U (Mosquito) and 7th inning for all other divisions).**
- c. Extra innings in semi-final and final games in the Mid-Summer Classic or City Championship shall be unlimited runs scored.
- d. Ten (10) runs difference after 4 innings (3 1/2 if home is ahead) for 11U (Mosquito), and after 5 innings (4 1/2 if home is ahead) for 13U (Peewee) to 18U (Midget).

8. Where a team fails consecutively or non-consecutively to show:

- a. for two (2) games, the teams' Coach shall be subject to suspension; and
- b. for five (5) games the team shall be disallowed from participating in the City Championships.

Hamilton & District Baseball Association

- c. Any team causing the forfeiting of a game for insufficient players failing to show up for a game shall be responsible for paying umpiring fees and are subject to a \$25.00 fine for each game forfeited.
9. Where a team has insufficient players available for league play to meet the minimum required by section 4.3, the team may pick up additional players from your own local association HOUSE LEAGUE divisions below their playing age.
 - a. where the player selected is pitching, such player must pitch from the distance of the level to which they are called and may only pitch for the total number of innings associated with the level at which they normally play.
 - b. for regular season play only, where there is no division below the team intending to make the call up, a player may be selected from a team of the same level with a max. of 10 players on the team.
10. Two base spikes are to be used on each base where bases with straps are used. Whether the base is single strap or double strap. Base distances and Pitching Rubber distances will be as followed:
 - a. 11U (Mosquito) i 65 feet for bases and 44 feet to pitching rubber.
 - ii For 11U (Mosquito) only, the "Killarney Plate" may be used.
 - b. 13U (Peewee) - 75 feet for bases and 50 feet to pitching rubber.
 - c. 15U (Bantam) and 18U (Midget) - 90 bases and 60'-6" to the pitching rubber.
11. In the second game of a doubleheader, the curfew will start at the appointed game time if the first game is finished more than 20 minutes before the game time. If not, the curfew will begin at the time of the first pitch.
12. Coaches should wear a park shirt and hat. If coach does not have either they are to identify themselves as the coach to the umpires.
13. All players must wear pants and a team uniform shirt, and hat.
14. All players must wear either a jock or jill.
15. Smoking is not permitted by Coaches or Players on the bench or the playing field.
16. Bat Restrictions:
 - a. No bat will be allowed with a barrel diameter greater than 2 3/4".
 - b. The HDBA House league does not restrict any bat as to weight to length ratio.
17. **Discipline:**
 - 1 **Conduct:** The house league committee in conjunction with the HDBA recognizes that "sportsmanlike" is one of the basics of competitive sports, which must be emphasized. Local Association executives, players, coaches, managers, umpires, parents/guardians and others are all expected to accept their responsibility for acceptable behaviour before, during and after games that are sanctioned by the H.D.B.A. A zero tolerance policy against unsportsmanlike conduct and "Zero Tolerance Policy of the City of Hamilton is emphasized.
 - 2 **Class 1 Ejections:** Non-contact incidents (involving players, managers, coaches, trainers or other on field personnel) include but are not limited to profanity, verbal abuse, gestures, spitting, baiting, etc., not directed at game officials, umpires, opponents, team mates or spectators; or throwing equipment, throwing or kicking of dirt, etc. which is not directed at an individual(s). Violations of the preceding shall be punishable as follows:
 - a. During any one game:
 - i. first occurrence – warning and/or ejection
 - ii. second occurrence – ejection
 - b. During any one season:
 - i. 1st ejection in this season – 1 additional game
 - ii. 2nd ejection in this season – 2 additional games
 - iii. 3rd ejection in this season – immediate indefinite suspension pending a HDBA Discipline Committee hearing.

- 3 **Class 2 Ejections:** Contact and non-contact incidents (involving players, managers, coaches, trainers or other on field personnel) include but are not limited to: physical touching, fighting, threatening with words or object, spitting*, throwing* of equipment, throwing* or kicking* of dirt, etc. (*which is directed at an individual etc.) between or among game officials, umpires, opponents, team mates or spectators. Any escalation or persistent behaviour that gave rise to a Class 1 Ejection will be treated as Class 2 ejections. Violations of the preceding shall be punishable as follows:
 - i. First occurrence in a game – ejection and immediate indefinite suspension pending a HDBA Discipline Committee hearing.
 - ii. All suspensions are effective immediately.
- 4 The onus is upon the player, coach, manager to notify the HDBA House league Interlock Convenor with regards to actions to be taken when an ejection occurs. **WHEN IN DOUBT DO NOT PLAY, MANAGER OR COACH!!**
- 5 Conduct while under suspension:
 - a. Players under indefinite suspension and Coaches, Managers and other non-player player personnel, while under indefinite suspension or fixed game suspensions, shall not be present at the Park during any game being played by their teams.
 - b. Players while under fixed game suspension must be present on the bench, at the game(s) for the sit out penalties in uniform. If the suspended player is on vacation, ill or absent for another reason, the penalty is not considered to have been served until the player “sits out”. Coaches will notify the opposing team that the player is sitting out a suspension. The player cannot serve in any capacity (base coach, bat person, etc.) that would require them to leave the dugout or bench.
 - c. No player can be called up to a higher division or across to a same division team while under suspension. The player must serve suspension in their own division before moving up.
 - d. If a player is ejected in their last game of the season, they may not participate in any games at any level. Suspension will start next season.
 - b. **Tournament Discipline**
 - a. During tournaments the tournament convenor, along with two ad hoc HDBA executive members may form a tournament discipline committee to deal with tournament related suspensions in a timely basis.
 - b. This tournament based committee will carry the same powers as the Discipline chair and a regularly convened discipline committee.
 - c. Any team that forfeits two games in a tournament may not advance to the next round of play.
18. **Lightning:** Baseball Ontario and the Hamilton District Baseball Association follow Environment Canada’s guidelines with respect to lightning safety.

When Thunder Roars, Go Indoors!

If you can hear thunder, you can be hit by lightning. Take shelter immediately. If you cannot find a sturdy, fully enclosed building with wiring and plumbing, get into a metal-roofed vehicle. Stay inside for 30 minutes after the last rumble of thunder.

For all regular season house-league games, any games stopped (after the official game time) under the OBA Thunder Policy, would be considered over; and, for other times, the OBA Thunder Policy is to be applied.

Direct strikes are responsible for only 50% of lightning-related deaths and injuries. Two other types of hazardous phenomena are caused by lightning. Ground current and side flash account for 60-80% of lightning-related injuries and deaths. A ground current is set up when lightning hits the ground, spreads out and sends a current through a victim. Side splash occurs when lightning hits a tall object, travels partly down the object and then jumps to a nearby victim.

HDBA Interlock House league 9U (Rookie) Ball Specific Rules:

1. GENERAL RULES:

- a. 9U (Rookie) ball shall follow the official Rules of Baseball and all HDBA specific rules unless otherwise stated herein.
- b. Traditionally each team shall field 10 players and consist of the following: fielders to play the positions of first, second and third base, a shortstop, a pitcher, a catcher, a left fielder, a right fielder, and two centre fielders. (Unless as per 1c), then only one centre fielder is required.
- c. Teams may play with a minimum of: Nine (9) players during a interlock and tournament play; and where a team plays with nine (9) players there shall not be an automatic out for the tenth (10th) batting position
- d. Where there is, no division below the team intending to make the call up, a player may be selected from a team of the same level with a max. of 10 players on the team.
- e. Any player(s) showing up after the game has started must be inserted at the end of the batting order.

2. DIAMOND LAYOUT:

- a. The pitching machine is to be placed directly in front of home plate at a distance of Forty-four (44) feet.
- b. An eight (8) ft. diameter safety circle shall be marked off directly in front of home plate and its centre shall be forty-four (44) ft. from home plate. No player may enter the safety circle. Note See Rule 6 e)
- c. Electrical cord must run along under the playing surface from the pitching machine to as close as practical to the electrical source.
- d. Two base spikes are to be used on each base where bases with straps are used. Whether the base is single strap or double strap. All bases shall be sixty-five (65) ft. from one another.
- e. The home field team shall be responsible for set-up and put away of all field equipment.
- f. The plate umpire shall be behind the batter; the second umpire shall be the traditional base umpire.

3. PITCHING MACHINE OPERATION:

- a. Coach feeding the pitching machine must wear a batting helmet with both earflaps and fully enclosed footwear.
- b. The pitching machine speeds for the regular season shall be 37 mph.
- c. The pitching machine speed will be 37 mph for the Mid-summer Classic Tournament.
- d. The pitching machine speed will be 37 mph for the City Championships.
- e. The pitching machine's speed cannot be altered except at the end of an inning.
- f. Any tampering with the machine speed by the coach feeding the machine shall result in the coach's immediate ejection.
- g. If at any time the machines speed is erratic, under the direction of the umpire the pitching machine coach shall be entitled to correct the speed (coaches from both teams shall be present).
- h. Height can be adjusted at any time. The umpire has the discretion not to allow the height adjustment if they feel that an attempt to delay the game is occurring.

4. GAME LENGTH:

- a. All regular season games shall consist of five (5) innings. Four (4) complete innings (three and one-half (3.5) innings if the home team is leading) shall constitute an official game.
- b. Tournament/Playoff Games
 - i) with the exception of Semi-Final or Finals all games shall consist of five (5) innings. Four (4) complete innings (three and one-half (3.5) innings if the home team is leading) shall constitute an official game.
 - ii) In the Semi-Final or Championship game, there shall be a complete five (5) innings (four and one-half (4.5) if the home team is leading) or until a winner is declared.
 - iii) In the Playoffs, with the exception of the Semi-Final or Championship game, a two (2) hour curfew (or as set by the tournament specific rules) is in effect starting from the scheduled game time.
 - iv) If a game is delayed due to time, weather, darkness or any other reason, prior to completion (becoming an official game), the game will be resumed from the point of the delay at another date or time.

5. MERCY RULE:

- a. In all games, with the exception of the fifth (5th) inning, a team's turn at bat will terminate with the occurrence of three (3) outs or six (6) runs. Coaches must notify the umpire if the max. six (6) runs are earned and the teams at bat shall be declared ended.

6. PLAYING RULES (Defensive):

- a. Each team shall consist of the following: a first baseman, a second baseman, a third baseman, a shortstop, a pitcher, a catcher, a left fielder, a right fielder, and two centre fielders.
- b. The out fielders must play no closer than the edge of the infield/grass area until the ball has crossed home plate. Any outs achieved while not following this rule shall not count and any advances will stand.
- c. In the interest of safety, all infielders must remain at their infield positions until the batter puts the ball in play.
- d. The pitcher must stand beside the pitching machine outside the safety circle. Lines must be drawn parallel to the release point outward 4 ft. beyond the edge of the safety circle. The pitcher shall have both feet behind the line but not further than the back of the circle until the ball is released from the machine. The pitcher must wear a regulation-batting helmet with attached face shield and chinstrap secured.
- e. No player shall, and in particular the pitcher must not, in any way break the plane of the eight (8) foot diameter circle around the machine whether stepping on the circle line or reaching in. If any player attempts to field the ball within the circle, the play will be called dead, the batter awarded first base and other runners will advance one base if forced.
- f. The person and feeding the machine must not interfere with any play being made by the defensive team. If the pitching machine coach does interfere then the batter will be called out and the runners will be returned to their base of origin. In case of the third out, the side is retired.
- g. Infielders may request time to be called when they have control of the ball in fair territory on the infield. Runners will be placed at the umpires discretion based on their positioning when time is called.
- h. The ball must not rolled but must be thrown or tossed to the base infielder for a force play. If rolled then the runner will be called safe.
- i. No player will be allowed to play more than three (3) innings in the infield.
- j. The infield fly rule does not apply.

7. PLAYING RULES (Offense):

- a. Each batter shall receive a max. of five (5) strikes as called by the umpire. A batter shall not be called out if the 5th strike is called a foul ball. (Note: If a ball crosses home plate over the batters head or bounces in the dirt the umpire will not call the strike, and another pitch will be awarded unless the batter swings at the pitch, at which the strike will be called.)
- b. To speed play, teams are required, to use five balls during the game. The five balls are pitched and reserved at home plate and returned to the pitching area by the umpire or coach at the end of each batters turn.
- c. Batters cannot walk or bunt. Any attempt to bunt will result in that the batter will be called out. All batters must take a full swing with judgment being an umpire's call.
- d. There shall be no passed balls or wild pitches.
- e. Any pitch hitting a batter shall be deemed a dead ball and no pitch. No runners shall advance.
- f. Base runners cannot leave the base until the batter puts the ball in play. If an infraction occurs, one (1) warning will be issued, and for any infractions thereafter, the runner will be called out. (Each team may receive one (1) warning.) No lead offs, and no stealing shall be allowed.
- g. If a batted ball hits the pitching machine, the machine operator, or any physical obstruction in the safety circle, the ball is immediately declared dead, and the batter is awarded first base with the corresponding move of any base runners that may be forced to move.
- h. No head first slides at all unless returning to a base. If a head first slide does occur the runner will be called out and the ball will be dead.
- i. The person feeding the pitching machine is considered part of the machine not a coach and must stay within the circle, the first offence in a game is a warning, and the second is removal of that person.



Hamilton & District Baseball Association

HDBA Local Association 2026 Rules

Dofasco Minor Baseball Association

- a) Pets are prohibited
- b) Dofasco Park has a lightning detection system, their protocol is as follows
If lightning is detected an alert air horn will blast outside once for 15 seconds and a strobe light on the roof of the Rec Park building will activate
 - 1 Everyone must clear the fields and remain in their vehicles, under the pavilion, under the breezeway at the field house or inside the main building lobby.
 - 2 Once the lightning has cleared, the air horn will blast 3 times 5 seconds each.
 - 3 Rec Park Staff will make their rounds in the main building lobby, parking lots, pavilion and breezeway at the fieldhouse to advise everyone that they can resume activity.

East Mountain Baseball Association (Mohawk Sports Park)

- a) 9U (Rookie) Ball, The pitching circle may not be chalked.
- b) 9U (Rookie) Ball, The cord to the machine may not be buried.
- c) For 9U (Rookie) Ball, 11U (Mosquito) and 13U (Peewee) games played on Mohawk Diamond 2, the outfield is determined to be approximately halfway between the edge of grass and the base path.

Hamilton and District Baseball Association Interlock House League 2026 Rules Summary - Table A

DIVISION	STEEL SPIKES ALLOWED	GAME LENGTH AND CURFEW	MERCY PER INNING	PITCHING LIMIT REGULAR SEASON	PITCHING LIMIT PER DAY/ TOURNAMENT	BALK RULE	LEADOFFS	DROPPED THIRD STRIKE
9U (Rookie)	No	5 innings or 2 Hours Curfew	6 runs per inning/5 th inning is unlimited No game mercy	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	No Runner may leave base until ball is hit Penalty:- 1 warning per team, each subsequent infraction runner is out	Not Applicable
11U (Mosquito)	No	6 innings or 2 Hours Curfew	5 runs per inning/6 th inning is unlimited	2 consecutive innings max. per game, may not throw consecutive days	2 consecutive innings max. per game, may pitch no more than one game per day and no more than two days in a row	Teaching Balk: Call time & explain to player and coach	No Runner may leave the base until the ball reaches the batter Penalty – Ball is dead, Runner is out (1 warning per team to be issued) Runner on 3 rd cannot score on a wild pitch or passed ball	Batter Out Ball is live – Baseball Rules
13U (Peewee)	No	7 innings or 2 Hours Curfew	5 runs per inning/7 th inning is unlimited	3 consecutive innings max. per game, may not throw consecutive days	3 consecutive innings max. per game, may pitch no more than one game per day and no more than two days in a row	Teaching Balk until Mid-Summer Classic Baseball Rules as of the start of Mid-Summer Classic	Baseball Rules	Baseball Rules
15U (Bantam)	No	7 innings or 2 Hours Curfew	5 runs per inning/7 th inning is unlimited	4 consecutive innings max. per game, may not throw consecutive days	4 consecutive innings max. per game, may pitch no more than one game per day and no more than two days in a row	Baseball Rules	Baseball Rules	Baseball Rules
18U (Midget)	Yes	7 innings or 2 Hours Curfew	5 runs per inning/7 th inning is unlimited	5 consecutive innings max. per game, may not throw consecutive days	5 consecutive innings max. per game, may pitch no more than one game per day and no more than two days in a row	Baseball Rules	Baseball Rules	Baseball Rules

Batters and runners must wear a helmet with two ear flaps at all times while on base, chin straps and cheek flaps are optional

City Championships are to be a round Robin Format