

# ADULT MEN'S THREE-PITCH BASEBALL RULES & REGULATIONS:

Summer 2018 – Version 1.0



## BASIC LEAGUE PRINCIPLES:

The Burlington Amateur Sports Leagues Inc. guiding principle is to have fun. This league stresses good sportsmanship, camaraderie and recreation. Players are expected to conduct themselves in a manner conducive with this philosophy and any disputes should be handled amicably at the ball park between the umpires and team captains. **Alcohol and other intoxicants are strictly prohibited at City parks.**

This league follows standard Three Pitch Ontario rules with the exceptions applied as listed in this document. Further variations to these rules are allowed provided that team captains agree prior to the start of each game. If there is no agreement, there is no variation.

## RULES & REGULATIONS:

### Diamond Layout:

- The distance between bases shall be 65 feet.
- The pitchers mound shall be 35 feet from home plate.
- A commitment line shall be used, drawn perpendicular to the 3<sup>rd</sup> base line to the dug-out fence at 35 feet from home plate.
- A "Safe Line" shall also be used. It is a line parallel to the first base line from the front most edge of home plate to the backstop. This is also the "Score Line".
- First base will be equipped with a safety bag. The white portion shall be in fair territory and the orange part in foul territory.
- Bases must be properly secured in position with pegs attached to the base straps and driven safely in ground.

### Equipment:

- **SHOES:** Players must wear athletic shoes on the field at all times. Open toe, steel or hard plastic cleats are prohibited. Rubber baseball cleats approved for use in softball are permitted.
- **JEWELRY:** Players may not wear jewelry during playoff games. Medic Alert bracelets are accepted.
- **GLOVES:** All players must use a baseball glove.
- **BATS:** Players may provide their own aluminum bats, approved for softball use. B.A.S.L. follows SPO/SPN Approved Bat Standards. For a summary of approved bats, please see Addendum #1 at the end of this document.
  - Cracked or damaged bats are not permitted and bat handles must have taped or rubber grips.
- **JERSEYS:** Team jerseys must be worn at each game.
- **GAME BALLS:** One new game ball is to be used for each double-header and is provided by the home team of the first game. All game balls are supplied by the league and distributed to the captains at the beginning of the season and the season half. Only league approved and supplied game balls may be used in all games. B.A.S.L. uses SPO approved Worth Optical Yellow limited flight softballs, (Model SPO12EY).
- **DIAMOND SET UP:** During Super Weekend the home team of the first game on each day is required to set up the diamond prior to the scheduled start time. Bases must be left in place for the day and recovered by the owner team at the end of play.
  - **PITCHING SCREENS:** Pitching screens are mandatory in all games.
- **HELMETS:** Are encouraged for the protection of all players and umpires. Players are encouraged to use helmets when batting, pitching or umpiring.

### 3-PITCH PLAYING FORMAT & BALL PARK RESTRICTIONS:

- NUMBER OF TEAMS: The B.A.S.L. Inc. Men's 3-Pitch League consists of between 6 and 16 teams.
- ROSTER SIZE: Team rosters shall consist of a minimum of 14 male players and a maximum of 20 male players.
- FEMALE PLAYERS: Female players are prohibited from participating. Teams that play with female players shall forfeit their game with a score of 10-0.
- AGE RESTRICTION: The B.A.S.L. Inc. minimum age restriction is 21 years. Players must reach the age of 21 years of age or older by the first regular season scheduled game.
- MAXIMUM NUMBER OF PLAYERS ON THE FIELD: Shall be 10, five outfielders and five infielders.
- MINIMUM NUMBER OF PLAYERS ON THE FIELD: Shall be eight. A team fielding less than eight (8) players shall forfeit the game.
- ROSTER QUALIFICATIONS: All players must be registered B.A.S.L. Inc. members.
- LOANING PLAYERS:
  - The B.A.S.L. Men's 3-Pitch League encourages avoidance of forfeited games.
  - During regular season play only, any team may, (and is encouraged to) loan players to another team in order to avoid a forfeit.
  - Only enough players needed to avoid a forfeit may be borrowed.
  - Borrowed players must remain on the team roster until the end of the game and must play a minimum of three innings.
  - Teams may also solicit temporary players during regular season play from the official B.A.S.L. Player's Pool list.
  - **Players may not be loaned to other teams during the playoff games.**
- PLAYOFF QUALIFICATIONS: All players must participate in at least 50% of all regular season games, (for mid-season replacement players, ½ of the games remaining at the time of signing), in order to be eligible to play in the playoff games.
  - Players injured during the season are exempt for their absence only if they attend games each week and assisting the team in some other capacity.
- ALCOHOL: Alcohol and other intoxicants are strictly prohibited at City Parks. Players who are in possession of alcohol at City Parks or who are suspected of intoxication will be ejected from the game and asked to leave the park.
- UMPIRES: Regular season games will be self-umpired. The batting and fielding teams will umpire each inning as follows:
  - The pitcher will umpire second base and outfield fly balls.
  - The first base coach will umpire first base and the home plate score line.
  - The third base coach will umpire 3<sup>rd</sup> base.
  - The catcher will call foul balls.
- PLAY MINIMUM OF THREE INNINGS: Players listed on the game roster must participate for at least three complete innings.
- LATE ARRIVALS & EARLY DEPARTURES:
  - Late arrivals may be added at any time prior to the beginning of the 4<sup>th</sup> (fourth inning) and must be inserted at the bottom of the batting order.
  - If players depart early or are injured during play, their place in the batting order shall be skipped.
- MERCY RULE:
  - There shall be a maximum of eight (8) runs per inning per team except the last inning, which shall be unlimited.
  - If the spread between teams is greater than eight runs in any one inning, the lower scoring team shall be allowed to score the spread plus one run for that inning.
  - The game ends when the spread between teams is 20 runs or more at the end of four (4) complete innings or any completed inning thereafter.

- **STANDINGS:**
    - Regular season play will determine final team rankings leading into the playoffs.
    - Teams will be awarded two points per win, zero points per loss.
    - No games shall end in a tie. International tie break rules will apply to break game ties.
    - Teams that win by forfeit will be awarded a game score of 10-0.
    - Both teams are responsible to report the game results to the league convener at the end of each game or within 24 hours.
    - Team captains are responsible to track their team's score during each game.
    - **RANKING TIES** will be broken using the following procedures:
      - **TWO WAY TIES:**
        - First tie breaker will be head-to-head winner.
        - Second tie breaker will be run differential of games played to date between only the two tied teams.
      - **THREE WAY TIES:**
        - First tie breaker will be resolvable head-to-head winner, (example: one team beat the other two).
        - Head-to-head **TWO WAY TIE** process will be used for the remaining two teams.
        - If no resolvable head-to-head winner, then total accumulated run differential for all tied teams will be used.
      - **MORE THAN THREE WAY TIES:**
        - Total accumulated run differential for all tied teams will be used.
- OUT OF PLAY BOUNDARIES:** Out-of-Play boundaries are to be communicated between both team captains prior to game start.

### **PLAYING TIMES, GAME DURATION & CANCELLATIONS:**

- **START TIMES & GAME TIME LIMITS:**
  - Regular season games will start promptly at the scheduled start time.
  - All regular season games will consist of seven innings.
  - **REGULAR SEASON:** The bottom of the 7<sup>th</sup> inning is not played if the winning team in the game has already been determined.
  - **PLAYOFFS:** The bottom of the 7<sup>th</sup> inning is not played if the winning team in the game has already been determined as ties are broken by head-to-head winners, run differential only between head-to-head winners or by resolvable head-to-head winners for three way ties or more.
  - **TIME LIMIT:**
    - A new inning may not begin one hour & 20 minutes past the **scheduled** start time regardless of the game score. This applies to the regular season games and playoffs rounds but excludes playoff championship games.
- **INCLEMENT WEATHER & CANCELLATIONS:**
  - Play is to be stopped upon sight of lightning. The game may resume once the storm has passed if time permits.
  - If the game cannot be resumed, four complete innings will constitute a full game.
  - Game cancellations due to inclement weather must be decided at the park unless cancellation is called by the league convener at least 1 hour prior to game time.
  - If a rain out advisement or league cancellation is provided, no official games shall be played or recorded for that day. Exhibition games may be played if field and weather conditions permit.
  - Non-league initiated cancellations shall be recorded as a split result, (1 win/1 loss; Score = 10-0) if neither game has been played. Non-league initiated cancellations include captain's decision to cancel based on unsafe playing conditions or City of Burlington Park closures. These cancellations will affect only those games impacted by the cancellation.
  - Team captains are responsible to notify their players of any cancellations.

- Rained out games may replace games scheduled during the last weeks of the season provided that the rained out matches have not already been repeated on the game schedule.
- In the event a game in progress is cancelled due to rain, games are considered complete after four full innings.
- Rescheduled games for reasons other than inclement weather must be pre-arranged with the league convener and agreed to by team captains at least two weeks prior to the re-scheduled date.
- **FORFEITS & FORFEIT CONDUCT RULES:**
  - **FORFEIT CONDUCT RULE: All teams are required to comply:**
    - Teams must attempt to avoid a forfeit by recruiting players from the BASL Player's Pool list or by borrowing players from other registered Men's 3-Pitch teams, (applicable during regular season play only).
    - Teams must provide advance notice to the opposing team of a possible or imminent forfeit no later than 24 hours prior to their scheduled game time.
    - **IMPORTANT: Teams that break these Forfeit Conduct Rules, (example: make no attempt to avoid a forfeit by recruiting players as indicated above or fail to provide 24 hours advance notification to the opposing team) more than two times in a single season will be immediately ejected from the program without refund.**
  - First occurrence is grace. Second occurrence is warning. Third occurrence is ejection from the program.
  - A game forfeit may be declared by a team captain at 15 minutes past the scheduled start time if the opposing team cannot field a minimum of eight players.
  - During regular season play, teams are encouraged to avoid a forfeited game by loaning or borrowing players from another team where appropriate. See "LOANING PLAYERS".
  - Teams who forfeit a game shall be awarded a loss and zero (0) points in the standings. The winning team shall be awarded the win and two (2) points in the standings with a score of 10-0.
  - Forfeited games may be rescheduled and must be coordinated by the forfeiting team with the league convener and opposing team. A cost of \$50 is levied to teams organizing a reschedule due to forfeiture. Fees are payable before any permits are arranged or issued. All rescheduled games are subject to diamond availability.
  - **Players may not be loaned or borrowed during the playoff games.**

### **BATTING RULES:**

- **THREE PITCH MAXIMUM:** Each batter is allowed only three consecutive pitches, regardless of quality.
- **FOUL OUTS:** Batters who foul the third pitch will be called out.
- **FOUL TIPS:** Foul tips caught by the catcher will render the batter out. There is no height restriction for this rule. ALL caught foul tips apply.
- **PARTIAL SWINGS:** Partial swings are not allowed. The batter shall be called out.
- **PITCHING SCREENS:**
  - A batted ball that hits the screen counts as one strike (dead ball).
  - Batters are out if the ball contacts the screen on the third pitch.
- **HIT PITCHER RULE:**
  - Batted balls that hit the pitcher are counted as a strike against the batter.
  - **Occurrences on the third pitch, the batter is out.**
  - The ball is considered dead in all cases.
  - Please see PITCHING SCREEN section above.
- **SCORING:** To score, any part of the player's foot must touch the ground on or past the home plate safe line before the catcher has possession and control of the ball and touches home plate.

- HOME RUN LIMIT & RESTRICTIONS (THREE PLUS ONE RULE):
  - Each team may hit three (3) home runs maximum without restriction.
  - Once both teams hit three (3) home runs, each team may resume hitting home runs BUT at no time for the remainder of the game can they exceed the other team's home run count by more than one (1).
  - Once the home run limit for either team is reached additional home runs will count as a strike against the batter. See HOME RUN DEFINITION below.
- HOME RUN DEFINITION: A home run shall be defined as follows:
  - For parks with fences, a home run is a hit over the fence only. "In the park" home runs are unrestricted and do not count as part of the home run total.
  - For diamonds without fences, any and all home runs are considered and are restricted to four per team per game.
- GROUND RULE DOUBLE:
  - A batter may advance to second base only if his/her ball travels under or bounces over an outfield fence.
- ILLEGAL BAT USE: (Reference Addendum #1 for a summary of B.A.S.L. approved bats.
  - Teams caught using an illegal bat shall immediately forfeit their game at the time of discovery. The forfeit score shall apply, (10-0).
  - Games completed prior to discovery are unaffected and games pending may still be played, (without the use of the illegal bats).
- DECLARED BATTER:
  - Declared batters that hit a home run as defined in the HOME RUN DEFINITION shall be awarded a single only.
  - Home runs hit by declared batters shall count towards the total home runs allowable.
  - All base runners already on base at the time of the home run shall score.
  - In parks with no fences a declared batter cannot proceed past first base on any hit. All on-base runners may advance at their own risk.

#### **PITCHING RULES:**

- The batting team provides its own pitcher.
- PITCHING FORMAT:
  - Pitches are to be underhand only.
  - Fastball or "windmill" pitches are not permitted.
  - Each batter is allowed three consecutive pitches only, regardless of quality.
- PITCHER OBLIGATIONS:
  - The pitcher must remain on the field and in play until the play is considered stopped. If a pitcher leaves the diamond before the play is stopped, all base runners will be returned to the base they were on at the time the pitcher left the diamond.
  - Baseballs must be returned to the pitcher to consider play stopped. Pitchers must field balls returned to them by an infielder, otherwise all runners must return back to the previous bag at the time of the infield throw.
  - Only infielders may return the ball to the pitcher. The pitcher is not obligated to recover a ball returned by an outfielder and the ball is considered "still in play".
- PITCHING SCREENS
  - Pitching screens MUST BE at least 6' high by 24" wide, sturdy and movable.
    - Pitching screens must be positioned facing home plate at the pitcher's desired distance between the pitcher's mound and a minimum of 20' from home plate.
    - Pitchers are NOT PERMITTED to pivot the screen before a pitch.
    - A ball that hits the screen through incidental contact at any time immediately stops the play.
      - Runners in progress must return to the bag they just departed.
      - This includes runners who have passed the commitment line but have not yet passed the scoring line. They MUST return to third base.

- Intentional contact of the ball with the screen IS NOT PERMITTED. Players may not intentionally throw the ball at the screen to stop any play.
    - PENALTY: Play stops immediately. All runners advance one base.
  - Pitchers are encouraged to move the screen in any direction (pivot, drop or relocate) at any time AFTER THE PITCH to avoid interference with a play.
- HIT PITCHER RULE: Batted balls that hit the pitcher are counted as a strike against the batter. Occurrences on the third pitch, the batter is out. The ball is considered dead in all cases. See PITCHING SCREEN above.
- PITCHER OBLIGATIONS:
  - The pitcher must remain on the field and in play until the play is considered stopped. If a pitcher leaves the diamond before the play is stopped, all base runners will be returned to the base they were on at the time the pitcher left the diamond.
  - Baseballs must be returned to the pitcher to consider play stopped. Pitchers must field balls returned to them by an infielder, otherwise all runners must return back to the previous bag at the time of the infield throw.
  - Only infielders may return the ball to the pitcher. The pitcher is not obligated to recover a ball returned by an outfielder and the ball is still considered “still in play”.

### **BASE RUNNING RULES:**

- The following activity is prohibited and will result in offenders being called out:
  - No base stealing.
  - No bunting or partial swings.
  - No leaving the base until the bat makes contact with the ball.
  - No re-crossing the commitment line between 3<sup>rd</sup> and home plate.
  - Runners may not touch home plate.
  - No throwing the bat.
- INTERFERENCE:
  - Obstruction of the base path by a defending player not engaged in a play or any contact between a runner and a defending player is prohibited.
- BASE LINE RULE: Runners who run beyond three feet on either side of the base line to intentionally dodge a play will be called out. Rounding base is accepted.
  - RUNNER INTERFERENCE:
    - Runners who interfere with a defending player making a defensive play shall be called out.
    - Defending players who are not fielding a ball or making a play and who interfere with a runner, the runner shall be awarded one base.
  - HOME PLATE TAGS: Tags at home plate are prohibited. Players who are tagged at home plate will be considered safe.
- SAFETY BAG RULE: Runners must always use the safety bag, (orange) at 1<sup>st</sup> base if there is an obvious play at 1<sup>st</sup> base, (example: infield ground ball). Players who fail to use the orange bag in this case will be called out. If there is no play at 1<sup>st</sup> base, either bag, (white or orange) may be used.
- OVER RUNNING FIRST BASE: Runners who run through 1<sup>st</sup> base must move into foul territory, (to the right) or if they motion towards 2<sup>nd</sup> base they will be considered still in play and may be tagged out.
- INJURED RUNNERS:
  - Players who declare they require a substitute runner may not proceed past first base for the remainder of the game from the time they make their declaration.
  - A home run hit by declared player: (See Batting Rules – DECLARED BATTER).
  - The requirement for a substitution runner must be disclosed to the opposing team captain before the game starts, unless resulting from an injury during the game.
  - Substitute runners must be the last player called out.

## FIELDING RULES:

- **CATCHER:** The fielding team provides its own catcher.
- **MINIMUM FIELDERS:** The fielding team must provide 5 outfielders and 5 infielders. The minimum a team may play with is eight players. Outfielders must play in the outfield and infielders must play in the infield.
- **INFIELD FLY RULE:** The infield fly rule **IS IN EFFECT.**
  - **SPO "INFIELD FLY" RULE DEFINITION:**
    - The rule applies only when there are fewer than two outs, and there is a force play at third base (i.e., when there are runners at first and second base, or the bases are loaded. In these situations, if a fair fly ball is in play, and in the umpire's judgment is catchable by an infielder with ordinary effort, the umpire shall call "infield fly" (or more often, "infield fly, batter is out") and the batter will be out regardless of whether the ball is actually caught.
    - If "infield fly" is called and the fly ball is caught, it is treated exactly as an ordinary caught fly ball; the batter is out, there is no force, and the runners must tag up. On the other hand, if "infield fly" is called and the ball lands fair without being caught, the batter is still out, there is still no force, but the runners *are not* required to tag up. In either case, the ball is live, and the runners may advance on the play, at their own peril.
- **PLAYS AT FIRST BASE:** The first baseman must touch the white bag to make a play at first base. Runners will be considered safe if the first baseman touches only the orange bag. The first baseman **MAY NOT** stand on first base or in the first or second base path **IF THERE IS NO PLAY AT FIRST BASE.** This is runner interference, (and is extremely unsafe). If a collision results, the runner shall be awarded one base.
- **DEFENDING PLAYER INTERFERENCE:**
  - Interference with a runner by a defending team player will result in an awarded base to the runner **UNLESS** the defending player is fielding the ball.
  - Defending players who are fielding the ball own the base path and runners must yield to the defending player.
- **POSITIONS & POSITION CHANGES:** Are prohibited during an inning. A "no pitch" will be declared and play will return to where it was prior to the infraction. Players must maintain their same defensive position throughout the inning unless:
  - Injury occurs during a play and the player must be removed or relocated to another fielding position.
  - A defensive player must leave the game during an inning for other legitimate reasons.
- **BASE AWARDS:**
  - Runners on base will be awarded the base they are traveling to **PLUS ONE** for balls caught and run out or thrown out of play by the outfielders.
  - Runners on base will be awarded the base they are traveling to **only** for balls caught and run out or thrown out of play by an infielder.
  - Runners standing on the base when the ball is run or thrown out of play will be awarded **ONE BASE** only.
- **Outfielders & Rovers** must maintain their positions on the grass until the ball is put into play.
- **ROVERS & OUTFIELDERS:** May not enter the infield prior to a hit ball.
- **FAKE TAGS:** Fake tags are prohibited. All runners will be awarded an extra base.
- **FOUL TIPS:** Foul tips caught by the catcher will render the batter out. There is no height restriction for this rule. **ALL** caught foul tips apply.
- **PITCHING SCREENS**
  - A ball that hits the screen through incidental contact at any time immediately stops the play.
  - Runners in progress must return to the bag they just departed.
  - This includes runners who have passed the commitment line but have not yet passed the scoring line. They **MUST** return to third base.
  - Intentional contact of the ball with the screen **IS NOT PERMITTED.** Players may not intentionally throw the ball at the screen to stop any play.
    - **PENALTY:** Play stops immediately. All runners advance one base.

## **DISPUTES & APPEALS:**

- **SETTLEMENT:** Disputes must be settled amicably between team captains on site.
- **WRITTEN:** Appeals must be presented in writing within 5 days of the game date and be accompanied by a non-refundable appeal fee of \$50.
- **QUALIFIERS:** Only appeals that could affect the outcome of the game will be heard by the B.A.S.L. governing body. (ie: league executive and B.A.S.L. convener).
- **DECISIONS:** Appeal decisions will be by majority vote of the league executive and B.A.S.L. convener.
- **B.A.S.L. CONVENER'S ROLE IN DISPUTES:**
  - The convener's approval is required to sanction any recommended solutions.

## **PLAYER MISCONDUCT:**

- **UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOR:**
  - Excessive swearing, fighting, intoxication, unruly or confrontational behavior is prohibited. Players may be ejected from the game by the team captains or umpires for exhibiting these behaviors.
  - All cases of player misconduct will be brought before the B.A.S.L. governing body, (ie: league executive and B.A.S.L. convener) for further assessment.
- Player's must conduct themselves at all times in accordance with the City of Burlington's Zero Tolerance Policy which can be reviewed by [clicking here](#):
- **YELLOW CARD ASSESSMENT:**
  - First occurrence of player misconduct may result in a "Yellow Card" status assessed to the offending player by the league governing body.
  - This status will remain with the player until the season ends.
- **RED CARD ASSESSMENT:**
  - Players assessed with a "Red Card" status will be immediately ejected from the league.
  - Red Card status will be granted upon the following infractions:
    - Second occurrence of player misconduct from a Yellow Carded player.
    - Fighting or any other extreme circumstances.
  - Red Carded players are banned from the league for a minimum period of 2 years.
  - No refunds will be granted to ejected players.



## ADDENDUM #1 – B.A.S.L. APPROVED BATS:

All 2012 USSSA Bats marked with the “NEW (1.20 BPF) USSSA STAMP ON THE TAPER OF THE BAT” will be allowed in the B.A.S.L. program. ALL new bats manufactured after January 1, 2012 “MUST CARRY THE NEW USSSA STAMP”. B.A.S.L. will also continue to use the 2000, 2004 ASA and ISF stamps and the [ASA Non Approved Bat List](#).

For quick reference, these bats are ILLEGAL:

- 1) Bats that are listed on the [ASA Non-Approved Bat list](#).
- 2) Bats that have only the new ASA Softball symbol, (see below).
- 3) Bats that do not have one or more of the LEGAL symbols listed below.

### QUICK SYMBOL REFERENCE GUIDE:

