

Emerson Junior Baseball League

Revised and Approved March 2010

MINOR LEAGUE RULES

2010

Emerson Junior Baseball League (EJBL) rules were originally based on the Official Baseball Rules published by National Baseball Congress. These rules have been modified over the years and may be amended further in the future. These EJBL Rules have been, and proposed changes must be, approved by the EJBL Board. Failure to abide by the EJBL rules may result in the suspension of the Managers, coaches and or players.

The school grade of each child will be the primary factor used to determine which league the child will play. There is also an age criterion to be met. Children in the 3rd or 4th school grades (and 5th graders) who will not be 11 before May 1st of the baseball season can play in the Minors. Once a child begins playing in the EJBL, the natural progression must be followed (one year of Tee Ball, two years in Peewees, two years in Minors, two years in Majors, then U13 (Pony) and U15 (Babes). Advancing a child to a higher level league based on talent is NOT permitted. Moving a child down to a lower level league than their grade and age prescribe is also prohibited. If a child has been left back in school or is physically challenged (disabled), a determination as to which league the child plays in will be made on a case by case basis. Input from the child's parents will be sought. The EJBL Board has final approval authority.

1. **BYPASS**

No Managers or coaches may make mutual agreements to bypass any rules. Managers, coaches and umpires must abide by these Rules and notify the League VP or EJBL Board of any problems that arise. Failure to comply with the Rules may result in suspensions or dismissal from the EJBL. These rules, unless otherwise noted within these rules, apply to the season and playoffs.

2. **STARTING TIME - FORFEIT**

Refer to the schedule for the starting times of all games. Night games on the Minor's (High Street) field usually start at 6:00 P.M. Minor's games played at night on the Benkovic field may begin as early as 5:30 or as late as 8 P.M. Teams have 15 minutes from the start time to meet the minimum requirement of seven players. The game must begin as soon as each team has seven players available. The umpires (**Refer to Rule 8**), Managers and coaches must make every effort to begin the games promptly and insure all the safety equipment is present before the game can begin. **Refer also to Rules 13 and 14.**

3. **STOPPING TIME**

For April games that begin at 6:00 P.M. on the Minors field no new inning may begin after 7:45 P.M.; beginning May 1st no new inning can begin after 8:00 P.M. For 5:30, 6:00, 6:30 or 7:30 P.M. games on the Major's field, no new innings may begin after 7:40, 8:10, 8:40 P.M. or 9:40 P.M., respectively. No new inning may begin after 2 hours and 10 minutes from the game start time. No extra inning regular season games are permitted. The umpire will retain complete and unquestioned authority to halt a game at any time for safety reasons, including darkness. If lightening is sighted, the game will immediately stop. The umpires should wait to see if lightening passes without a reoccurrence for 20 minutes before a game can resume or the game will terminate at that point. **Refer to Rules 4 and 39.**

4. **LENGTH OF GAMES**

Games will be 6 innings. Four innings (3 1/2 if home team is ahead) will constitute an official game. In the event that a game must be called, the score will revert to the last full inning played after the third inning. When a game is called in the bottom of the fourth with the home team ahead, the score at that time will be the official score. If a game is called before it has become a regulation game, the umpire shall declare it a "suspended game". The game will be rescheduled and played from the point of suspension. For games suspended before becoming "official", the Managers or coaches must exchange current lineups, base runners, the batter's count and outs as soon as possible. **Refer to Rules 12 and 38.**

5. **MERCY RULE**

A five run per half inning mercy rule is in effect, except for in both halves of the last inning when unlimited runs will be allowed. Other runs scored as part of the same continuation play that resulted in the fifth run scoring will count. (Example: after scoring four runs in a half inning, a base hit drives in two runners so six runs will have scored and all six runs count). **See Rule 34 on base stealing limitations.**

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6. *DUGOUT or BENCH AREA*

The home team shall have the first base side dugout. Both teams are responsible for their equipment. Players should not be in the stands or by the other team's bench area during a game. Only team players, the Manager and three coaches (chosen by the Manager) are permitted on the field or in the bench area/dugout during pre-game warm-ups and games.

7. *PREGAME WARM UP*

The scheduled teams must equally split available warm up time prior to game time.

8. *UMPIRING*

If the assigned umpire does not arrive for a game, the Managers may pick an adult umpire on whom they both agree to serve as the head umpire. They must abide by his or her decisions. If the umpire chosen is either the Manager or coach of one of the teams playing, that team must have no less than two other certified adult coaches running that team. If an adult umpire cannot be found, the game will be canceled. Umpires shall not allow anyone behind the backstop. Umpires shall be addressed as "Umpire" or "Ump" and not by name. Umpires working behind home plate must use protective equipment including a mask.

9. *SUBSTITUTION*

The umpires shall not keep the lineup cards. Managers are responsible for communicating substitutes, pitching changes and batting orders. **Refer also to Rules 4, 11, 24 and 25.**

10. *PLAYER SWITCHING*

The switching of a player's defensive position while an inning is under way is prohibited except for switches related to pitching changes, an injured player requiring a replacement and/or at a player's request for safety reasons. If the player who will be your catcher next inning is on base with two outs he/she can be replaced as a runner by a player who last made or was forced out.

11. *EXCHANGE OF LINEUPS*

Managers or coaches of opposing teams shall exchange starting lineups prior to the game and again if the game is suspended prior to being an "official game". **See Rules 4 and 38.**

12. *SCOREBOOK*

A scorebook shall be maintained by each team's Manager or coach for each game. Innings pitched and lineups for both teams should be tracked. **Refer to Rules 4, 11, 24 and 25.**

13. *BATTING ORDER - MINIMUM PLAYERS*

A continuous batting order will be used consisting of all players present at the start of the game. Any player who joins a game after the first pitch must bat in the last batting position. If a player in the batting order (line up) becomes unavailable to bat due to injury that spot in order can be skipped the first time that player is to bat after the injury without the team being charged an out. The injury must be reported to the umpire and opposing manager prior to the at-bat. If the injured player is unavailable to bat in his/her next scheduled at bat, an out will be charged each time (after the first) that spot in the order comes up for the rest of the game. If a player is unavailable to bat because he or she had to leave the game prematurely, that spot in order can be skipped the first time that player is to bat after the player left as long as the opposing manager and umpire were notified that the player had to leave. An out will be charged each time (after the first) that spot in the order comes up for the rest of the game. If a player is unavailable to bat due to ejection the batter is ruled out every time that player's turn in the batting order comes up.

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Teams must have at least seven players available to start and continue a game. For regular season games, an eighth and/or ninth fielder (outfielder(s)) can be borrowed from the opposing team each inning by using opposing players who made the last out(s). Borrowed players can only play the outfield against their regular team. If a team has fewer than seven players to start, or is reduced to fewer than seven players during, a Playoff game, that team must forfeit the game. Should this occur during the regular season, the opposing coaches should combine the available players for a scrimmage game. Players cannot be taken from other leagues in or out of the EJBL to fill voids. Pitching limitation per **Rule 24** still apply.

14. **PLAYINGTIME**

All players present at the start of a game must play a minimum of three of the first four innings and four of the first six in the field. Players who arrive after the start of the game will be subjected to the following standard.

<u>Inning of arrival</u>	<u>Must Play</u>
1 st	Not less than three innings of a complete game or less than one inning of an official game
2 nd or 3 rd	Not less than 2 innings of a completed game.
4 th or later	Not less than one inning of a completed game.

When a player arrives late but the player's team batted through the lineup already (meaning the leadoff batter already batted twice) the late player must be added as the last batter in the original batting order. Free substitution of fielders (except the pitcher) is permitted at the start of each inning. Allowing players to play different positions is strongly encouraged. Failure to observe the playing time stipulation may result in suspensions or dismissal from the EJBL. Such incidents must be reported to the League VP or EJBL Board. **See Rule 10.**

15. **COACHING ALIGNMENT**

Two adult base coaches are allowed. If a player is used as a base coach he/she must wear a helmet. Each team is limited to four coaches, including the Manager during pre-game warm-ups and the game. The Manager will select the coaches for their game. Coaches of the team in the field must remain behind the fence or fence line. **Refer to Rules 6 and 44.**

16. **DISTRACTION**

There is to be no interference by Managers, coaches, players or spectators with the umpires or players, either on offense or defense. Interference is defined as any action, vocal or physical, which tends to distract or otherwise impair the efficiency of an umpire or player in the performance of his/her duties. The umpire shall have the complete authority to judge this offense and to, if necessary, eject the Manager, coach and/or players from the game. Such incidents must be reported to the League VP and EJBL Board as soon as possible.

17. **PLAYER EQUIPMENT**

Players must use EJBL approved equipment. Only EJBL approved bats shall be permitted. Bats can be a maximum of 33 inches in length and not exceeding a 2¼-inch barrel. If wooden, the bat is not to be less than 1¼-inch at the smallest point and not less than an inch for bats less than 30 inches. All bats must be taped not exceeding 16 inches from the small end. All bats must have visible Little League logo or printed approved dimensions. Uniforms, when supplied, are to be worn at games or special events designated by EJBL officials. Under no circumstances shall a player, while wearing a uniform, engage in fund raising without the express consent of the EJBL or Friends of Emerson Junior Baseball.

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For games, all players should be in full uniform, when supplied, properly worn, with shirts tucked in and caps on with the peak to the front. In games or practice, legs must be covered completely with pants and/or socks. All players shall be required to wear necessary protective equipment including an athletic supporter and it is mandatory for all catchers to wear a protective cup during games and practices. It is suggested that all players wear a protective cup during games and practices. Any player not in conformity with these rules shall be declared ineligible. Each team must bring one new ball league approved baseballs per game.

18. SAFETY

Before each game, efforts should be made to ensure a cell phone is available in case of an emergency. Players are encouraged to bring water containers (not glass) to games and practices. If a player intentionally and without regard to others, throws a bat or helmet or misuses equipment, that player may be ejected from the game. Chewing/eating gum, food or candy on the field or in the dugout area is prohibited. Metal cleats are not permitted. No hanging or unsafe jewelry may be worn. Any player with an injury that warranted a trip to a doctor, medical facility or hospital will not be allowed to practice or play until a doctor's note clearing the child to play is provided to the team Manager and if requested, the EJBL Board.

19. PLAYER CONTROL

Managers and coaches are required to keep all players not on the field together in the "dugout", except the next player due to take his/her turn at bat, players instructed by the Manager to warm up prior to entering the game, or as deemed necessary by the Manager or coach. This protects players from injury via foul balls or thrown bats and prevents player interference. No one is permitted to stand behind the backstop.

20. ON DECK BATTERS

Only the batter and on deck batter may have bats in their hands. This rule is an important safety rule. All bats must be kept in the on deck area or in an equipment bag.

21. TEE HITTING - NOT APPLICABLE

22. TEE PITCHING - NOT APPLICABLE

23. PITCHING - BASE DISTANCE

The pitcher's rubber will be set approximately 46 feet and no inches from the rear of home plate. The bases will be 60 feet apart.

24. PITCHING LIMITATIONS

A pitcher may pitch a maximum of 5 innings per week through April, or 6 innings per week beginning in May, which runs from Sunday through Saturday. The start date of a pitching week may change for the playoffs. A pitcher must have 3 days rest between pitching assignments in which a player pitches in 4 or more innings and 1 day rest if 3 or fewer innings. This rest rule may be changed for the first week of the playoffs. No pitcher may pitch more than 6 innings within 3 calendar days. Each game in which a pitcher pitches is considered an assignment. (Example: a player pitching in more than 3 innings on Monday can not pitch again until Friday). A single live pitch thrown during the game constitutes a full inning pitched. Once a player pitcher is removed from pitching, he may not reenter the game as a pitcher. The rest rule shall have precedence over inning per week rule. Violation of this rule will result in forfeiture of the game and/or suspension of Manager and, possibly, the player. **(Refer also to Rules 26, 28 and 42).**

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25. REPORTING RESPONSIBILITIES

Both Managers must report the pitchers used for each team and the number of innings they pitched to the League VP by the next day preferably via email. The VP must be notified of problems incurred including if the umpire failed to show up. **Refer to rules 12 and 24.**

26. WARM UPS - PITCHES

Pitchers are permitted up to 8 warm up pitches. The catcher is permitted one throw down to second base per inning on the last warm up pitch. One live pitch thrown (during the game) constitutes an inning pitched for the purpose of pitching limitations. **Refer to Rule 24.**

27. BALKS - INTENTIONAL WALKS

Balks are not applicable. There will be no intentional walks permitted.

28. HIT BATTERS - WALKS

Batters hit by a pitch advance to first base. A pitcher must be removed if he/she hits two batters in one inning or three batters in a game. A pitcher must be removed if 5 consecutive batters in any combination are either walked or hit by pitches from the same pitcher.

29. TRIPS TO THE MOUND

Visits to the same pitcher by the Manager or coaches are limited to one per inning and maximum three per game. On either the second visit to the same pitcher during an inning or the fourth visit to the same pitcher in a game, that pitcher must be removed. If in the judgment of the umpire a visit was necessitated by injury, the umpire will accompany the Manager/coach to the mound and such visit will not be counted.

30. OVERTHROWS

If a pitch is thrown out of play, the base runners will advance one base. If a thrown ball (other than a pitch) lands in fair or playable foul territory, the runners may advance at their own risk. If a ball is thrown out of play by a fielder, the runners will advance two bases from the last base the runners occupied when the ball was released as determined by an umpire.

31. INFIELD FLY

The Infield fly rule will not be in effect.

32. TAGGING UP

Tagging up is permitted on any fly ball.

33. BUNTING

Bunting is allowed.

34. STEALING

Stealing from second to third base is allowed once the ball has passed the plate. The runner attempting to steal third base may not advance from third to home on an overthrow. A base runner is never allowed to take his/her foot off the base until the ball passes the plate or is hit by the batter. Batters cannot advance to first base on a missed third strike. A base-runner whose team is leading by seven runs or more at that point in the game is not allowed to steal except in the last inning.

35. SLIDE RULE - INTERFERENCE

If a runner does not slide or attempt to get around a fielder who has the ball and is waiting to make the tag or force the runner out, the runner will be called out. If a runner goes out of his/her way in an attempt to take out the fielder who already put the runner out, the other runner going to the base where the fielder was attempting to throw to shall also be ruled out. Any defensive player blocking any base or baseline will forfeit any out made as a result of the interference. Headfirst sliding to advance to the next base is prohibited; the runner is ruled out. Coaches should instruct players of these rules before the games.

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36. PROFANITY - CONDUCT

Intentional profanity by a player, Manager or coach is prohibited and must be reported to the League VP or the EJBL Board. The person using profanity may be ejected from the game. Smoking is not allowed on the field or in the bench area. **Refer also to the Ejections Rule.**

37. CLEANUP

At the end of the game, managers, coaches and volunteers from both teams will rake the pitcher's mound, batter's box and baselines and clean the dugouts and Press Box area (for games played on *Benkovic Field*).

38. CALLED or SUSPENDED GAMES

Determination that a field is playable or not will be made by the Fields Coordinators, the EJBL President, EJBL Executive Vice President or League VP (in that order, if available). That person or his/her assistant will report the cancellation as soon as possible to the hired umpires, the Managers of the teams scheduled to play, the League VPs and the concession coordinator. The Managers must notify their players. The league VP will notify the person in charge of scheduling. If a game is called before the completion of three full innings, the umpire shall declare it a "suspended game". The game may be rescheduled and played from the start of the half inning that had not been completed. **Refer to Rules 4, 9 and 11.**

39. RESCHEDULED GAMES

All games to be rescheduled for any reason will be done only by the EJBL Scheduling Coordinator in conjunction with the League VP. The VP of the League will notify the team Managers. Rescheduled games will be played within one week of cancellation, if possible. Games may be rescheduled as early as the next calendar day, which may include Sunday.

40. PROTESTS/COMPLAINTS

Protests are not permitted during the regular season. The EJBL Board will review playoff protests and other complaints received. If a member of the Board is involved in the protest or complaint he/she shall be excused from the protest or complaint review process. The protesting Manager must notify the opposing Manager when he/she informs the umpire of his/her protest. The protesting Manager must also notify the league VP the day of the game and the protest must be filed in writing with the league VP or the EBL President, within 48 hours. Judgment calls can not be protested. Complaints should be directed to the League VP or to the Board at the Public Session of their Board meetings.

41. SEASON

The regular season shall be determined each year based on a number of factors including the number of teams, post season tournaments and All Star team schedules.

42. POST SEASON

The post season shall consist of a knockout tournament. The first two rounds are scheduled and future rounds will be drawn from a hat. Teams are eliminated in the first two or three rounds once they have two losses. Once two teams are left a Championship game will be held. The first day of the tournament (Playoffs) will be the first day of the pitching week. However, the one-day rest rule still applies. Therefore, any player who throws one or more pitches in an EJBL game cannot pitch the next day.

43. AWARDS

Trophies will be presented to the final two teams of the post season tournament.

44. COACHES CERTIFICATION

All Managers and coaches are required to be certified through an EJBL approved course, namely the Rutgers certification, which since 1996 is a lifetime certification. The EJBL Board Member in charge of certifications will notify any current coaches and Managers who were previously certified through other courses when their certification must be updated. The EJBL Board will determine who is authorized to manage or coach.