

BRANSON PARKS AND RECREATION  
**Recreational League - General League Rules –Youth Baseball & Softball**

The Branson Parks and Recreation Youth Baseball Leagues are governed by rules designed to meet the following goals:

1. All players will be given an opportunity to play each game.
2. Sportsmanship will be promoted by participation in the Branson Parks and Recreation Baseball Program.
3. Player's health and safety shall be promoted at all times.
4. All teams should be evenly matched.

**A. TEAM ORGANIZATION**

1. Sign-up period: The Branson Parks and Recreation Staff will establish a sign-up period. A player who does not sign up during this period will be placed on a waiting list and assigned to a team as spots become available.
2. The Branson Parks and Recreation Staff will assign waiting list players to teams whose roster falls below fifteen players. The head coach will be notified.
3. Once a team is established, each boy/girl will remain on this team. No player may switch teams under any circumstances except when approved by the Branson Parks and Recreation Staff person in charge of the program.
4. Siblings who are eligible for the same league may be placed on the same team for family convenience.
5. All teams will be organized by the Branson Parks and Recreation Staff.
6. Drafted teams will follow the following:
  - a. Coaches will draft five players at the time they sign up to coach.
  - b. Once coaches are chosen, the Branson Parks and Recreation Staff will put the drafted players on the selected coach's team.
  - c. Branson Parks and Recreation Staff will put all remaining participants in alphabetical order, place all coaches in alphabetical order, turn over participant forms, and will sort teams one by one until all teams are full.
7. Manager Assignment Policy: Only one person will be designated as manager (head coach) for each team. Managers (head coaches) will be assigned to the teams on which their sons have been placed. Manager assignment is left to the responsibility of the Branson Parks and Recreation Staff person in charge of the program. Not all coaches who wish to be a head coach will be selected.

**B. EQUIPMENT**

1. Managers are responsible for exchanging equipment at the Branson Parks and Recreation Office.
2. In the Branson Parks and Recreation baseball program, any glove is permitted except the pitcher's glove must not contain white.
3. Metal cleats of any type shall not be worn by any player participating in the baseball program.
4. In the interest of safety, the following equipment rules shall be enforced:
  - a. Catchers will wear all protective gear, including catcher's helmet, at all times while catching.
  - b. A protective NOCSAE-approved batting helmet covering the ears must be worn by any player who is on deck, at bat, or on the bases.
  - c. Exposed jewelry such as earrings of any kind, wrist watches, bracelets, neck chains, rings, and nose jewelry cannot be worn during the game. The umpire will stop the game and ask for exposed jewelry to be removed.
5. Shirts must be worn inside trousers, if possible, and baseball caps worn whenever possible. After warning by the umpire, failure to abide by this rule may result in ejection from the game.
6. During games, all equipment must be kept inside the dugout.
7. Managers are responsible for the return of their equipment on the day of the last game. Please see the Equipment Sign Out Form for more information.
8. SOFTBALL: All players must wear a double-ear batting helmet with attached mask/face guard while on offense.

**C. PLAYERS**

1. Managers are required to list the entire team roster for each game. Boys who are absent must be noted along with a brief explanation (sick, injured, vacation, etc.).
2. Harassment of officials and/or umpires by players will result in ejection from the game.
3. Poor sportsmanship (such as intentional throwing of bat, glove, cap, or arguing, etc.) by a player will result in ejection from the game. Two such charges will result in a seven day suspension.
4. Number of players in the lineup:
  - a. A team must use no more than 10 defensive players in the lineup.
  - b. A team may play with as few as seven (7) players without penalty only if there are absences. At least seven original team members must be present to play, or a forfeit will result.
  - c. If a team begins play with less than ten players, late arriving team members must be added to the end of the batting order (see rule J-5). A late arriving player (or players) shall assume their defensive positions during the first dead ball occurrence following his (or their) arrival. The umpire and official scorekeeper (home team) must be notified.
    - i. The team designated by the schedule to be the home team shall be the official scorekeeper for the game. The official scorekeeper must use a regulation scorekeeping book and must keep track of the following:
      1. Count (balls, strikes, outs)
      2. Score of the game (5 runs per inning, run rule, etc.)
      3. Line up used by both teams.
        - a. COMMENT: The umpire's focus should always be on administering the rules of the game of baseball/softball. The scoreboard is not an official account of the score and should not be treated as such.
  - d. If at any time during the game less than seven team members are eligible and available to continue the game, then the game will be forfeited by the team lacking the seven team members.

#### **D. DEFENSIVE SUBSTITUTES**

1. If a player does not attend a minimum of one complete practice during the week before a game, his coach may ask the Recreation Specialist to designate the player as ineligible for that game. The Recreation Specialist must give his/her approval before any player can be declared ineligible.
2. Every defensive half inning, all players who did not participate defensively in the previous half inning MUST enter the game defensively for this half inning.
3. FAILURE TO ABIDE BY THE ABOVE RULES (E-1 and E-2) WILL RESULT IN FORFEITURE OF THE GAME.
4. Courtesy Substitutes.
  - a. A courtesy substitute may replace an ill, injured, or otherwise incapacitated player or an ejected player on defense or as a base runner only.
  - b. A courtesy substitute base runner must be the last batter that batted who is not on base.

#### **E. MANAGERS AND OFFICIALS**

1. Harassment of the officials by managers and coaches will result in ejection from the game.
2. Bat boys/bat girls are not allowed in any Branson Parks and Recreation League youth baseball game. Only team members, coaches and adult scorekeepers will be allowed in the dugout during the game. The umpire has authority to remove unauthorized persons from any dugout.
3. Managers and officials must leave the diamond premises if they want to smoke or chew tobacco.
4. No manager, coach, or player shall be allowed to stand behind the backstop or behind the fence from their dugout to their opponent's dugout while their team is playing.
5. Defensive coaches will not be allowed to position themselves any closer to the field of play than the opening of the dugout. One warning will be issued and upon the second offense the offending coach will be restricted to the bench for the remainder of the game. A third offense will warrant ejection. Coaches may not sit on a bucket past the opening of the dugout. This is a safety rule and is not applicable during time outs or dead ball situations.

6. Under no circumstances will coaches or players argue judgment calls including balls and strikes. After a warning, a coach or player will be ejected.
  - a. EXCEPTION: Players participating, coaches coaching a base, or injury.
7. Umpires and managers must meet at home plate prior to the start of the game.

**F. PROTESTS** - No protests are allowed.

**G. GENERAL**

1. For rules not covered in these bylaws, Recreational League youth baseball will be governed by United States Specialty Sports Association (USSSA) baseball/softball guidelines and Official Baseball Rules (Baseball Only).
2. Branson Parks and Recreation Staff will record the scores of all games for record keeping purposes only.
3. The Branson Parks and Recreation Staff will determine the readiness of the field for play of all ball games.
4. The Field Supervisor will have power to rule on all infractions.
5. Unsportsmanlike behavior may result in penalties being imposed upon the offending individual, including coaches, participants, or spectators. Penalties will be decided by a committee made up of Director of Parks and Recreation, Assistant Director of Parks and Recreation, and the Branson Parks and Recreation Staff person in charge of the activity.
6. REMINDER - No batboys or batgirls are allowed in the dugout or on the field. This rule is instituted solely for safety's sake.
7. The Manager is ultimately responsible for the team's crowd and their actions. If a problem occurs in your team's crowd, you will be given a warning to take care of the situation. If the problem persists, the coach will once again be notified and the umpire will eject the offending spectators. Further problems will result in forfeit of the game and possible suspensions of team, coaches or fans.
8. The Branson Parks Department requires that players, parents and coaches sign a "Code of Conduct" prior to the season starting that relates to behavior and sportsmanship to which ALL will be held accountable. Sportsmanship violations, including foul language, intimidation, and threat of infliction of bodily harm against game officials, staff or other participants, coaches and spectators will not be tolerated and those in violation will be subject to ejection from the game and suspension from future games at the discretion of the Parks Staff.
9. The program supervisor will make final determination on any rules or interpretation that may arise throughout the season.
10. Any rules not covered in this rules packet will be left to the discretion of the Recreation Specialist in charge of the program.