

DUNDALK-EASTFIELD
Eastern Baltimore County Over 40 Baseball
Rulebook Adaptions to MLB Rules



Version 2025.01

Eastern Baltimore County Over 40 Baseball League

PLAYING RULES

Eastern Baltimore County Over 40 Baseball (O40BB) uses the Official Rules of Baseball as its base, with the following adaptations. The adaptations are for use at the start of a new season and any O40BB sanctioned event where the promoter chooses to use them. These rules have been distributed to members of the Umpires Association.

Note I: These rules apply directly to Regular Season and Post Season play. (unless noted)

Note II: The O40BB rules amplifications, exceptions, and adaptations, **updated as of April 1, 2025**, supersede any other written copy of O40BB rules.

1.0 Rule interpretations, addendums

1.00 Age Requirement: You MUST be age 40 years by the end of the current calendar year to play in the same calendar year.

1.01 Strike zone: O40BB encourages umpires to call a “full” strike zone as described in Official Rules of Baseball: “. . . that area over home plate, the upper limit of which is a horizontal line at the midpoint between the top of the shoulders and the top of the uniform pants, and the lower level is a line at the hollow beneath the kneecap. The Strike Zone shall be determined from the batter’s stance as the batter is prepared to swing at a pitched ball.”

O40BB notes: 1) Over home plate is strictly a judgment call for each umpire. 2) Batters who duck a pitch do not compress their strike zone.

1.02 Batters box: Batters must keep one foot in the box during their at bat, with the following exceptions: 1.02a. When batter is driven out by a pitch or has swung at a pitch.

1.02b. Defense calls time out, or pitcher is off the mound.

1.02c. Defense attempts a play, or a wild pitch / passed ball occurs.

1.02d. Catcher leaves his position.

1.02e. Offense (or batter) is granted a time out.

1.02f. Batter fakes a bunt or assumes possible ball 4.

1.02g. When the batter is out of the box, he may not leave the dirt area around home plate except in the case of a substitution, a conference, or an equipment problem.

Notes: The intent of this rule is to keep the game flowing. When a player is in violation of this rule, the umpire will ask that the batter return to the batter’s box – one warning per offending player. If the

offending player does not return to the batter's box (or if the violation is repeated), a strike will be called.

without a pitch being thrown.

1.03 Decoy Tags: Decoy tags, inducing a runner to slide unnecessarily, are prohibited. An offending player is subject to potential ejection, with the runner awarded at least one base or as many bases as he would have made without the obstruction. There will be no warnings.

1.04 Intentional walk: Hitter may be waived to first base upon the direction of the defensive team manager, pitcher, or catcher.

1.05 Hit Batters: Any pitcher who hits two (3) batters in one inning, or 4 total in a game, must be removed from the pitching position. He may continue to play offense and defense.

1.05a. Umpires are instructed to not grant first base to a hitter who makes no attempt to get out of the way of a pitch or leans into a pitch to get hit. The umpire's decision is based on his judgment, and a ball (or strike) will be called.

1.06 Clean Base Hit Rule "Mike Lockett rule" An *outfielder* shall not attempt to throw a batter/runner out at first base when a batted ball cleanly reaches the outfield grass. An outfielder may attempt to throw a runner out at second, third or home when a batted ball cleanly reaches the outfield grass. An infielder may make a play on any ball he can. The Lockett Rule ONLY applied to the TWO designated players who need courtesy runners. All other batsman will not have the Lockett Rule apply to them.

1.07 Courtesy Runner Players that will need courtesy runners must have their manager notify the opposing manager and home plate umpire at the home plate meeting. Otherwise, the opposing manager has the right to refuse the courtesy runner. Each team will be allowed a maximum of two players per game who can be classified as needing a courtesy runner. Each time a designated player reaches base, he will call time out and at that point will be replaced by the last batted out. If the last batted out also is listed as needing a courtesy runner, the second to last batted out will run. In the case that no outs have been recorded when the designated player reaches base, the last batter in the lineup will act as the last batted out.

1.07a Courtesy runners are allowed to advance at any time.

1.07b If a player becomes injured during a game, the same rule applies for that runner (last batted out). The injured player is not allowed to play defensively the next inning. Should the injured player not be able to return to play, then he will be dropped from the line-up with no penalty.

If the offensive team replaces the runner with the wrong courtesy runner (a player that was not the last batted out) and the opposing team protests before the next pitch, then the original runner must run and the right to use the courtesy runner for this batter will be forfeited for the balance of the game.

If the original runner inadvertently runs for himself and the opposing team protests after the first pitch, the right to use the courtesy runner for this batter will be forfeited for the balance of the game.

If the right to use a courtesy runner is forfeited by violating any of the three rules above, the offending team will not have the right to use another courtesy runner for an injured player.

(For example: A team designates two courtesy runners prior to the game and in the fourth inning, one of the designated runners inadvertently runs for himself. That player then forfeits his right to a courtesy runner for the remainder of the game and his team may only use the one other courtesy runner originally designated. Should a player get injured after this, that player must be pinch run for.

1.07c A Courtesy runner for the catcher with two outs is allowed. Last batted out rule applies.

1.08 Pitching

Pitchers can pitch a maximum of **5 innings**. One pitch constitutes an inning pitched, even warm-ups. Once a pitcher is replaced, he returns only one time as a pitcher. He may play any other position.

A pitcher that hits **3 batters in one inning or 4 total in a game**, will be removed from pitching for the remainder of that game.

1.09 Limited Runs Per Innings Provisions

During innings 1-6, a team may score a maximum of 6 runs per inning, there are no restrictions in the final 3 innings and can't be changed for any reason.

During innings 1-6 if a player hits a HOMERUN their score or any other will not count once we reach six in the official score book.

The 6-run rule is suspended for Play-Off games. The rule is used to keep the game moving along during the regular season, not penalize teams during play-off contests.

1.10 Players Playing Time

All players bat the whole game regardless of playing the field. Players must be allowed to play in the field unless they choose otherwise. The Umpires do not regulate this; it's up to the MANAGERS.

1.11 Infield Fly Rule

The infield fly rule will follow Major League rules as it is stated. The rule itself is not the issue, it is the way it is executed. A player (infielder) must be "camped" under the pop fly. Any excessive back-pedaling or erratic attempt by the fielder should not be ruled an infield fly automatic out. This note is strictly for the umpires to use as a guide when interpreting this play. The umpire should make this call and use his judgment.

1.12 Visit to the Pitcher's Mound

There will be a limit of 2 visits a manager/coach can visit the pitcher's mound before the pitcher is removed. Upon the second visit, the pitcher must be replaced with another. Pitcher's mound visit exceptions are the following:

- a) Any visit to the mound, between batters, to discuss defensive strategy by the catcher or other infielders where the pitcher or other players do not relocate.
- b) Any visit to check on pitcher's health regarding injury or potential injury.
- c) Other players cleaning cleats with tongue depressors or rubber spike cleaner pad during rainy/muddy conditions.

1.13 Shift Rule Over 40 Baseball does not use the MLB Shift Rule. All position players, except the catcher, must be in fair territory before each pitch is thrown. Players can position themselves however they choose.

2.0 Safety on the bases

2.01 Runners should avoid collisions with defensive players fielding a batted ball (fielders are entitled to the ball, which includes a step-and-reach beyond the point of contact with the ball, until such time as the ball passes a fielder with a chance to field it).

2.02 Any player – offensive or defensive – who initiates intentional and/or malicious contact with an opponent shall be called out, if applicable, and be subject to ejection.

2.03 Illegal slides will result in the sliding player being called out and being subject to ejection.

2.03a A legal slide is directly to the base (defined as player being within an arm's length of the bag) on a straight line from the previous base. A slide may go past the base as long as it is not in the direction of (or makes contact with) the defensive player handling the baseball; any runner who deliberately slides into a defensive player away from a base is out and subject to both an interference call and ejection if contact is deemed malicious.

2.03b An illegal slide is described as:

2.03b.1 barrel-rolling

2.03b.2 body blocking

2.03b.3 sliding with such momentum that it takes the sliding player into a fielder beyond the base.

2.03b.4 sliding out of the baseline and contacting defensive player.

2.03b.5 pop-up slides where runner initiates contact with defensive player.

2.03b.6 sliding with spikes above the fielder's knee. (Offensive players may not hurdle a defensive player attempting to make a play or to avoid a tag.)

2.04 A defensive player may not deny an offensive player any access to a base (or plate) without possession of the ball. Obstruction is the ruling: The runner is safe, and a delayed dead ball shall be called to allow play to finish.

2.04a Catchers may not block home plate without possession of the ball. (Straddling home plate is considered 'blocking' the plate. Note: O40BB follows the 2023-established MLB guidelines and addendum on plays at the plate and strongly suggests catchers position themselves in front of the plate while awaiting a throw on a play at the plate and slide into blocking position once in possession of the baseball.)

2.04b If an umpire rules obstruction for blocking a base without the ball, the defensive player will be warned; a second warning may result in ejection.

2.04c If, in the case of a defensive player denying access to a base without possession of the ball, and the runner collides maliciously, the runner shall be declared safe on the defensive player-initiated obstruction but will be subject to ejection from the game. The ball is dead.

2.04d if a runner initiates a collision with a defensive player attempting to make a play, it is offensive interference, and the runner is out. If the collision is ruled malicious or intentional, the runner is also subject to ejection. The ball is dead on offensive interference.

2.04e Malicious contact is described as initiating contact with arms and/or elbows up or in front of the body, lowering a shoulder, use of forearm in the contact or an act in the judgment of the umpire that is intended to harm or injure another player. Malicious contact includes all elements of illegal slides.

3.0 Sportsmanship

3.01 Sportsmanship and adult attitudes must prevail regardless of level of competition. Umpires are requested to eject players before, during or after games for any of the following behaviors, considered to be unsportsmanlike:

3.01a Consumption of alcoholic beverages during a game. (While O40BB and its umpires cannot make judgments on sobriety, managers are requested to prohibit players who appear intoxicated or smell of alcohol from playing. Umpires will eject players who smell of alcohol.) (See Rule 3.02 regarding alcohol.)

3.01b Threats of physical intimidation of umpires, players, or spectators, including any threatening physical contact.

3.01c Verbal abuse of umpires, players, or spectators, such as profanity, name-calling, belittlement, or excessive harassment.

3.01d Excessive profanity, defined as profanity that, in the umpire's judgment, is audible in the stands, dugouts and area surrounding the field of play, regardless of intent.

3.01e Throwing of equipment (bats, helmets, gloves, etc.).

3.01f Fighting.

3.02 Alcohol: Alcoholic beverages are prohibited at the playing sites – before, during and after all games. Playing sites are defined as the playing site itself plus the property owned by the same entity surrounding the playing site. This includes parking lots. Player(s) found in violation of open-container ordinances at playing sites are subject to a 2-game suspension. Exception: Within the fenced boundaries of any event facility where alcohol sales are permitted by law.

3.03 Tobacco: Smoking is prohibited on the field of play during games. Players who wish to smoke must go to the stands, dugout or the parking lot. Player(s) found in violation of tobacco regulations at playing sites are subject to ejection.

4.0 Game guidelines

4.01 Games: All games are scheduled for 9 innings unless noted. Managers have the discretion to shorten the length of games due to weather or other logistical conditions that are beyond their control.

4.01b Time Limit: No new inning will begin after 2:45 hours of playing time in a scheduled 9-inning game.

The exception to this rule is during the playoffs or tournament type play. The game will continue until there is a clear winner.

Special Notes: It is each team manager's responsibility to monitor time issues. Umpires are requested to notify both benches at least 1 full inning ahead of reaching time limits. Umpires will 'stop the clock' on a) weather suspensions, b) injuries where a player requires medical attention on the field, c) to handle protests, and d) any other unavoidable delay.

4.01c Weather issues: All games stop immediately when Lightning is visible. Weather-stopped! Games are suspended pending the decision of the Umpire, regardless of number of innings played. (Umpires may suspend but not declare game over in weather situations.)

4.02 Extra innings: Games where scores are tied at the completion of 9 innings shall go into extra innings provided time limits allow. The last batted player who made the last out will start on 2nd base as a runner to begin extra innings.

See 4.01 for exception to rule.

4.03 Lineup cards: Both managers, prior to and at the home plate meeting at the start of the game, will give the opposing manager a copy of their lineup, which MUST include:

4.03a First Initial or first name and last name of all players who potentially could appear in the game.

4.03b All players (including all substitutes and relief pitchers) MUST be listed on the lineup card, even if they are not starting offensively or defensively, to be eligible to play in the game.

4.03c Umpires will be responsible for lineups during the game to handle eligibility questions, score book discrepancies and batting out of order issues.

4.04 Batting Order The basic batting order is 9 hitters; there is no maximum. Batting order may not be reduced after the first pitch. All players must bat if the player chooses to hit. He is not required to play the field if he wishes. Managers should play his players in both offence and defense positions if the player chooses.

4.04a Teams may start a game with 8 players; when ninth player shows up, he will be inserted into the ninth spot in the batting order without penalty.

4.04b A substitute player is allowed, up to a maximum of 2 players if they are a member of Dundalk-Eastfield Over 40 Baseball. This rule is only for the regular season...not play-offs.

4.04c If the batting or fielding contingent is fewer than 8 at any time, the game is ended with the deficient team forfeiting.

4.04d If a team begins play with 9-or-more players and all are in the offensive order (therefore, no substitutes available), and a player is forced to leave the game (offensive & defensive lineup) for an injury or non-ejection type of reason, no "out" will be declared when that player's position comes to the

plate. However, if the offensive player leaves the lineup for an ejection type reason, an “out” will be declared for that vacant spot in the batting lineup each time it comes to the plate. Notes: If a player is injured and out of the game, he is removed both offensively and defensively. If an injured player wants to hit in a 9-man scenario, he must also run or walk to first base.

4.04e Exception to the automatic out: A game may not end on the automatic out. 4.04e Additional hitters may be added to the end of the batting order provided that

4.04f.1 players are listed on lineup card.

4.04f.2 offensive lineup may not be reduced at any time; exception being injury (see 4.04c above).

4.04f.3 team adding to its lineup must communicate addition to umpires and to opposing team/score book prior to that player hitting.

4.05 Defensive substitution: There will be free and unlimited defensive substitutions without reporting to the umpire, the official scorekeeper (in playoffs) or the opponent’s scorekeeper (although it is a courtesy to do so). Exception: Pitching changes must be reported to the umpires and to both team’s scorekeepers.

4.05a Defensive players are not required to play offense, and offensive players are not required to play on defense.

4.06 Official Scorebook: The home team scorebook is the official scorebook unless the home team concedes the responsibility to the visiting team and informs umpires.

4.07 Pre-Game meeting: Managers are required to attend pre-game home plate meeting. (In case of protests and/or ruling clarifications, umpires will discuss issues only with those who attended pre-game plate meeting.)

4.08 Protests: Protests are allowed on misapplication of game rules. Protests on a judgment call by an umpire will be declined. Retroactive protests will not be accepted. Protests must be made at the point at which a rule has been misapplied. To protest a game, a manager must:

4.08a Stop the game before the next pitch is thrown.

4.08b Notify the umpire and the opposing manager that the game is being played under protest.

4.08c Write in the HOME team’s score book the situation and on what grounds the game is being protested. The protesting manager must sign the notations.

4.08d The umpire must sign the HOME team’s score book, noting the situation of the game (including the count on the hitter) when

the protest was lodged.

4.08e Protesting team must write down reason of protest and give it to the plate umpire (who gives it to the Commissioner or event official addressing the protest).

4.08f Umpires and managers will meet with O40BB representative or will contact either the Tournament Director or O40BB President (via phone if not on site) and resolve the protest before resuming the game. Decision of O40BB official is final.

4.09 Ejections: Ejected players must leave the field of play and the vicinity of the playing field upon gathering their belongings. Any further contact with the umpires, even after the game finishes, could bring possible disqualification from the remainder of the event. All ejections carry automatic suspension for the player and require a written report from the umpire to be submitted to the Chief of Umpires and Tournament Director immediately upon completion of the game. The Commissioner will have total authority to number of games suspended based upon the severity of the incident.

4.10 Ejection Reinstatement: Ejected players are suspended for the next game (minimum) played by his club. Failure to do so will result in a team forfeiture and further disqualification. Any player ejected twice during the season, regardless of reason, is disqualified from further competition. Appeal: Any player ejected twice must file a written appeal for a hearing with the Commissioner.

4.11 Slaughter Rule: The game will end if the difference in run total is 12 or more after 7 innings are completed in a 9-inning scheduled game... and 5 innings completed in a 7-inning scheduled game.

4.11a Slaughter Rule is suspended during all playoff games.

4.12 Playoff Tournament: All teams will be eligible for the End of Season Playoff tournament. Playoff format may change from season to season based upon number of teams and calendar length.

5.0 Uniforms, equipment, Etc.

5.01 Uniform: All participating players must be in full, numbered, baseball uniform while within the confines of the field of play.

5.01a Uniforms must be buttoned and tucked in.

5.01b Skull caps on base coaches are recommended but not required.

5.01c Duplicate numbers are legal. (Teams with duplicate numbers are required to note on the lineup card distinguishing features of the players with duplicate numbers.)

5.01d Players and/or coaches may not switch jerseys once play has begun.

5.01e While pitching, a pitcher may not wear white undershirt sleeves, batting gloves on the pitching hand, light-colored batting gloves on their glove hand, or wristbands on his pitching arm. Pitcher's glove must conform to baseball standards and cannot be in color combinations that include white, except in the glove's lacing.

5.02 Helmets: Batters and runners are required to wear batting helmets. Batters are encouraged to wear helmets with an earflap toward the pitcher. Cracked helmets are prohibited. No catchers' helmets allowed while at bat. No exceptions.

5.03 Skull Caps: Catchers are required to wear a skull cap or hockey-style helmet when catching. No exceptions.

5.04 Wood bats:

- a. All Bats must be solid wood, single-unit construction and cannot be hollow.
- b. Bats with wood barrels and handles of a different composition or design are prohibited. (Laminated wood bats and AX Bats are approved if they meet the all-wood specs.)
- c. There are no requirements that bat companies certify their bats, unless the bat is challenged, and umpires/ officials cannot decide of the bat's construction with data at hand.
- d. On Challenged bats during a game, event playing rules take precedence. In absence of written rules, Umpires may either 1) call for an official to decide, or 2) confiscate the challenged bat and deliver it to league officials at the conclusion of the game.

5.04a Sanctions for violations on non-approved bats.

5.04a.1 First offense: Reported during the at-bat, warning issued, bat confiscated, get another bat and play on; If discovered after at-bat and before first pitch to next hitter, batter is out, bat confiscated.

5.04a.2 Subsequent violations with same batter: Batter called out, ejected, bat confiscated.

5.04a.3 All confiscated bats delivered to Commissioner office; bats returned to owners once last game of the season is completed.

(Including Play-offs)

5.05 Gloves: Catchers may wear first baseman's mitts, and first basemen may wear fielder's mitts. Mitts must conform to ORB size guidelines (i.e., maximum outfielder's mitt size is 13 inches.)

5.06 Shoes: Metal spiked shoes are allowed; however, only those manufactured for baseball. No track or golf shoes allowed. Metal spikes may not be sharpened.

5.07 Baseball Pants: Players must wear gray, white, off-white-colored pants.

5.08 Club Name: Club name must be called official MLB Team name from years 1965- present.
Example= Expos, Colt 45s, Rangers, Senators, Pilots, Yankees, Twins, Rays, Rockies, Brewers, Royals, Reds, Orioles, Astros, Cubs, Indians, Dodgers...etc.