



2026

SENIORS HANDBOOK

BRITISHBASEBALL.ORG.UK

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For any questions or clarifications, please contact the Senior Leagues Committee – senior.leagues@britishbaseball.org.uk

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BBF adult baseball is governed by the “Major League Baseball Official Baseball Rules” for the preceding year, lagging one year behind the MLB. For example, the 2026 BBF season will be played to the 2025 MLB Official Baseball Rules (OBR). Rules specified in this handbook are called the British Baseball Playing Rules and Bye-laws which supersede all other rules, e.g. if this handbook contradicts OBR in any way, the ruling in this handbook applies.

PLAYING RULES SPECIFIC TO BBF ADULT BASEBALL GAMES

1. THE PLAYING FIELD

The field of any BBF club should have a minimum home run distance of 250 feet. If any part of the home run fence does not meet this distance, any ball hit over the fence at a distance of less than 250 feet will be declared a two-base hit and not a homerun. Teams must notify the Seniors League Committee at the start of the season if any home game will be affected by the 250-foot limitation. Before games are played on a field below the minimum dimensions it must first be agreed by the League Commissioner in writing and the visiting team must be notified a minimum of seven (7) days before the date of the game. The visiting team has the option to protest to play the game on a larger field which will be decided by the Seniors League Commissioner and no appeals are allowed.

The size of first, second, and third base bags should be 15 inches square. The new 18-inch base bag size as specified in OBR, as well as the OBR rule change of widening the running lane between home and first base as specified within 5.09(a)(11), do not apply to BBF games.

The following minimum standards for fields on game days apply:

- A foul line should be chalked/painted from the home plate all the way to the outfield fence on both the left-field and right-field sides. Each respective foul line should be in line with the back of Home Plate, to the left side of the third base bag (3B/LF line) and the right side of the first base bag (1B/RF line).
- Two batter's boxes should be chalked/painted in line with the size as specified in the OBR.
- Fields should be prepared and maintained to a reasonable standard at the start of a game and in-between games of a doubleheader.
- A dead ball boundary should be marked using permanent or temporary fencing. Cones or chalked/painted lines are not an appropriate substitute for fencing. The fencing should make its way around the full perimeter of the field to ensure that the only entrances/exits to the field are by the backstop and the dugouts.
- NBL and Division 2 only: An enclosed dugout using permanent or temporary fencing. Cones or chalked/painted lines are not an appropriate substitute for fencing. The fencing should make its way around the full perimeter of the dugout with one entry/exit point from the dugout to dead ball territory and at least one entry/exit point from the dugout to the field of play.

Any field deemed to have issues (dimensions, level of safety, poor maintenance etc.) should be reported to senior.leagues@britishbaseball.org.uk along with photographic or video evidence if available. If field standards can be remedied on the day, then the home team must make all reasonable and timely efforts to remedy or be subject to a forfeit at the discretion of umpires.

Extenuating circumstances beyond the reasonable control of the home team can be used as a defence and should be taken into account on the day of the game. Any report made will be reviewed and penalties may apply to offending teams for failure to adhere to specified field standards if deemed necessary.

2. BATS

All senior leagues are wood and/or bamboo composite bat, only, with the exception of:

- Women players in any Senior league division may use aluminum or composite bats as long as they follow the BBCOR or USABat or USSSA certification standards, with no bat having a greater drop than 'drop 5'.
- Players aged under 16 in the Senior leagues Divisions 3, 4 & 5 games may use aluminum or composite bats as long as they follow the BBCOR or USA BAT certification standards, with no bat having a greater drop than 'drop 5'.
- Within regular season SWWBL Division 4 and 5 games, any individual may use -3 BBCOR Certified bats. When SWWBL Division 4 and 5 teams compete in games outside their division, including National Baseball Championships, such bats are not allowed and any bat must be either one piece wood bats, or wood and/or bamboo composite bats, to ensure a level playing field with all Championship teams.

For one piece wood bats, any commercially available brands may be used.

For wood and/or bamboo composite (laminated) bats only, any bat carrying BBCOR accreditation is approved.

3. HELMETS

All helmets worn while batting or running the bases must have double ear-flaps. All helmets must carry the CE mark. This includes during any pre-game batting practice and pitching warmups require a catcher's mask/helmet.

4. THE OFFICIAL BASEBALLS

The home team must provide a minimum of three new official balls for each game and if exhausted, provide further new or used (good condition) official balls (the umpire has the final say on which balls are in 'good condition' and may remove any ball from the game at their own discretion).

Note: In 2026, the official BBF baseballs for senior competition and/or league play remain unchanged and will be:

- Baden 3B-NFHS or 3B-PERF
- Wilson A1010 ('S' or 'PRO')
- Rawlings ROLB1
- Teammate ('TM130', 'TM150', 'TM190')

All senior teams at all levels can use either the above listed baseballs during BBF fixtures. For all post season and all other competitions, the BBF will decide and supply the ball to use.

Clubs cannot mix and match, i.e., teams can only use one type of ball for each game; otherwise, you are subject to a penalty.

The cost for supplying the baseballs is the responsibility of the home clubs.

Penalties apply for not adhering to the above at the discretion of the League Commissioner.

5. SHOES

Cricket spikes are not suitable and not permitted. Baseball cleats are recommended as the most suitable footwear option. It is recommended that players under 18 wear molded cleats (rubber or plastic). Players should wear appropriate footwear considering the field they are due to play on and no dangerous footwear should be worn. Home teams should communicate to opposing teams no later than 72 hours before the start of a game on shoe requirements on pitching mounds or other areas of the field (no metal on portable mounds as an example) for it to be enforceable on the day of the game.

6. UNIFORMS

Uniforms must comply with the OBR specifications. Commercial advertising or patches are allowed. Teams do not need a different set of uniforms for home and away games. The BBF reserves the right to specify uniform recommendations or regulations for each league.

7. LINEUP CARDS

Each team is expected to purchase, carry and use baseball line-up cards for all games (one copy to the umpire, one to the scorer, and one to the opposing team manager). Line-up cards come in different configurations.

Each lineup card is required to list all participants and substitutes by way of:

- Jersey number
- First initial of player's first name
- Player's full surname
- Playing position (not applicable to substitutes that have not yet entered the game).

Each team should keep their copies of line-up cards after the game in case there is a challenge or protest.

Rules specifying how teams designate which players are eligible to play as a pitcher, position player or a "Two-Way Player", do not apply to BBF games, 4.03(c)(1) to 4.03(c)(4).

8. NUMBER OF PLAYERS

A team in BBF NBL, Division 2 and Division 3 leagues must place a minimum of nine players on the field. The penalty to not field nine players in NBL, Division 2 and Division 3 is a forfeit of the game.

In Division 4 and Division 5, a team may start and/or complete a game with eight players without any penalty of a forfeit. A team starting with eight players has to leave the ninth spot in the batting

order open and will incur an automatic out when the open nine spot is up to bat throughout the game. If a ninth player arrives after the game has started, they may be added to the batting order in the open ninth spot. They must wait until the current batter has completed their time at bat before taking their position in the field. If a team starts a game with nine players but is forced to complete a game with eight players for whatever reason, the “open” spot in the batting order where the automatic out will be recorded is the spot where the ninth player was originally listed.

9. SUBSTITUTIONS AND RE-ENTRY

A player is not allowed to re-enter the game once substituted, except for during regular season Division 4 and 5 league play where up to three players per team may re-enter the game once, as long as the player being substituted by a re-entering player has played on the defence during at least three consecutive outs and has had at least one plate appearance. A player can only re-enter at the start of a half-inning on which their team is on defence. The half-inning is deemed to start when the umpire puts the ball in play.

So called “courtesy runners” for the catcher, where a temporary and unlisted runner replaces the catcher on base with two outs in an attempt to speed up the game, are allowed in Division 4 & 5. The replacement runner shall be the hitter that preceded the catcher in the lineup. If this player is on base, then it shall be the hitter that preceded them, etc.

10. PITCHING RESTRICTIONS

- A pitcher is not allowed to pitch in more than one game per day.
- Pitchers under the age of twenty three (23) must follow the MLB Pitch Smart Guidelines in BBF Senior leagues. The link to these guidelines is: www.mlb.com/pitch-smart/pitching-guidelines. This includes stipulations on pitch counts, rest periods, and workload management, aligning with contemporary best practice to ensure the healthy development of young pitchers. A pitcher will be considered to have violated this rule when throwing one or more pitches above the prescribed limits.

Extract from MLB Pitch Smart Guidelines:

Age	Daily Max (Pitches in Game)	0 Days Rest	1 Days Rest	2 Days Rest	3 Days Rest	4 Days Rest	5 Days Rest
7-8	50	1-20	21-35	36-50	N/A	N/A	N/A
9-10	75	1-20	21-35	36-50	51-65	66+	N/A
11-12	85	1-20	21-35	36-50	51-65	66+	N/A
13-14	95	1-20	21-35	36-50	51-65	66+	N/A
15-16	95	1-30	31-45	46-60	61-75	76+	N/A
17-18	105	1-30	31-45	46-60	61-80	81+	N/A
19-22	120	1-30	31-45	46-60	61-80	81-105	106+

Any violation of the above pitching restrictions should be reported to the umpire by the opposing manager during the game. The penalty for any pitch count violation is automatic ejection of the

pitcher and manager of the offending team. Further penalties may apply subject to disciplinary investigations.

11. THE BATTER'S BOX RULE

For a batter's second or subsequent violations of the Batter's Box Rule 5.04(b)(4)(A) in a game, the umpire shall award a strike without the pitcher having to deliver the pitch. The ball is dead, and no runners may advance.

12. WARM UP PITCHES

The pitcher will have eight warm up pitches the first time they take to the mound. For each subsequent inning that the pitcher returns to the mound, they will have five (5) warm up pitches. Warm up pitches should be completed as quickly as possible, and the umpire may reduce the number of warm up pitches if they feel that a team has taken an unreasonable amount of time to complete the warm up.

13. PITCH CLOCK

No formal pitch clock is applicable to BBF leagues. Rule 5.07(c) regarding the maximum allowed time to deliver a pitch still applies.

14. THREE CONSECUTIVE BATTER MINIMUM

The minimum batters faced requirements as listed within Rule 5.10(g) apply, however, if any conflict with these BBF playing rules makes this impossible, the BBF playing rules shall prevail. For example, if pitch count restrictions mandates removal of a pitcher, this substitution will be allowed.

15. MOUND VISITS

All BBF leagues will follow the mound visit rules as specified in OBR. In addition to the existing rule where a second trip to the same pitcher in the same inning will cause this pitcher's automatic removal from the game, each team is limited to four (4) trips to the mound per nine inning game (5.10(m)(1) of OBR) with one extra trip per extra inning of play, and three (3) trips per seven inning game (13.11.1 of the WBSC Official Rules of Baseball), with one extra trip per three extra innings, where the pitcher is not removed from the game. For any extra-innings played, each team shall be entitled to one additional non pitching change mound visit per inning.

Mound visits have no explicit time limit but should be concluded swiftly and at the umpires' Discretion. For BBF play, 'visit' and 'trip' carry the same definition - the term 'visits' used in OBR and 'trips' used in OBR carry the same definition, where 'trip(s)' is substituted for both to avoid confusion.

The last paragraph of rule 5.10(l) comment, specifying that replacing the pitcher shall constitute one trip to that pitcher that inning, shall not be in effect.

16. REGULATION GAMES

A game scheduled to be seven (7) innings or less is considered a regulation game after four (4) innings have been completed, or after three and a half (3.5) innings with the home team leading, or if the home team scores one or more runs in their half of the fourth inning to tie the score.

A game scheduled to be nine (9) innings is considered a regulation game as specified in 7.01(d).

17. RUN DIFFERENCE RULES

The following run difference rules will apply to BBF adult competitions.

The table below summarises the number of offensive innings that must be completed by the losing team in order for the mercy rules to apply.

	10 Runs Difference	15 Runs Difference	20 Runs Difference
7 Inning Games	5 Innings	4 Innings	3 Innings
9 Inning Games	7 Innings	5 Innings	N/A

18. EXTRA INNINGS

In the event of extra innings, a runner will start at first and second base at the start of each half-inning which is a slight variation from Rule 7.01(b). The runners placed on base at the start of each half-inning shall be the two players (or a substitute for such players) in the batting order immediately preceding that half-inning's leadoff hitter.

Where there are more than two games scheduled on one diamond per day, extra innings will not be used to determine the winner of any of the games. Instead, the 'countback' rule will be used, where the team that was in the lead at the end of the last full inning where the game was not tied, is declared the winner.

19. SUSPENDED AND POSTPONED GAMES

At any time after line up cards have been exchanged at the plate conference, the decision whether to call or postpone a game for any reason, including weather or field conditions, is at the sole discretion of the umpire-in-chief.

MLB and Minor League-specific exceptions specified in 7.02 regarding games within these league structures (e.g. specifically during Division Series, Wild Card series, World Series etc) do not apply to BBF games.

20. PROTESTS

Protests are allowed in BBF games. The BBF has established rules governing the procedure for protesting a game, and protests must be submitted to the relevant league commissioner or technical commissioner within a set time period, as detailed below:

- For National Baseball Championship (NBCs) games, protests must be submitted in writing to the Technical Commissioner within 5 minutes of the incident/potential rule

misapplication/infringement. This submission must clearly detail the rule number and the reason for the protest. The decision of the Technical Commissioner is final.

- For regular season games, the manager wishing to submit a protest must inform the umpire-in-chief that they wish for the game to be played under protest, and must email senior.leagues@britishbaseball.org.uk no later than 48 hours after the scheduled start time of the game in question, clearly stating the rule number, the reason for the protest, and the name of the umpire(s) of the game. The decision of the League Committee is final. Upon receipt of this email, the senior leagues committee will notify the opposing team that a game has been protested within 24 hours of receiving the protest email.

For protests because of alleged misapplication of the rules, the protest will not be recognised unless umpires are notified at the time the play under protest occurs and before the next pitch, play, or attempted play.

No protest will ever be permitted on judgment decisions, and there are no appeals for the decisions made following a protest submission.

ADMINISTRATIVE RULES AND OTHER BYELAWS

21. PLAYER MOVEMENT RULES AND POSTSEASON ELIGIBILITY

The objective of having player movement rules is to allow clubs to field competitive teams for all scheduled games, while upholding fairness and integrity within the league by preventing any undue advantage. Additionally, it ensures that players have the opportunity to develop their skills in key positions, such as pitching and catching.

SECTION ONE - ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA FOR MOVEMENT:

- Players can only move between teams within the same club.
- Movement should ensure fulfilling games and competitive balance, and to allow for development.
- Player movement should not be used to create a competitive advantage.

SECTION TWO - ROSTER SUBMISSION AND REASSIGNMENTS

Players must not feature on more than one roster within a club, they should only feature on the roster of the team that is their primary team within the club. No movement of players between rosters is permitted from 12th April 2026 until 11th May 2026.

Players may be reassigned to a different roster within the same club from 11th May 2026 until 13th May 2026. This is known as the 'Reassignment Period'. If a player is reassigned, the player must not be removed from the roster they already featured on, penalties may apply if players are removed.

There is no restriction to reassigning a player to a higher level team during the Reassignment Period.

If Clubs wish to reassign a player to a lower level team (or to a team of the same level) within their Club, the Club must first inform the Senior Leagues Committee no later than 10pm London time, on 13th May 2026 by filling out the relevant form, available at <https://www.britishbaseball.org.uk/forms> . This will be reviewed by the Senior Leagues Committee and will either be approved or rejected by 10pm on the 15th May 2026.

From 16th May 2026, Player Movement is then permitted as outlined in the next section.

SECTION THREE - MOVEMENT GUIDELINES

Note: The allowance for movement up, across, and down, detailed in this section, is permitted only from 16th May 2026 (after the Reassignment Period) until the end of the Regular Season.

Movement Up

- Players may play in a league higher than the league they have been rostered to, but only so long as they play more than 50% of their games at the level below. If they reach 50% of their games at the higher level, then they are reassigned to the level above. (Example: Player X has played 6 games at Division 2 and 4 at NBL as of the 25th May. At this point they are considered a Division 2 league player. The following weekend, player X plays 2 games at NBL, bringing their total to 6. At this point they are considered an NBL league player.)

Movement Across

- Players may play across teams at the same level of the same club, with whichever team they have played more games for being assigned their team for playoff eligibility purposes
- A player cannot pitch for more than one team per level.

Movement Down

- All movement down will be prohibited with the exception to develop pitching and catching as described below.
- Players may play down one league for the purposes of developing as a pitcher or catcher. A club wishing to roster a player down for these purposes must send an email to the Senior Leagues Committee no later than 1pm London time on the Wednesday preceding the game in question. This will be considered and either approved or rejected by the Senior Leagues Committee no later than Friday at 10pm of the same week.
- For the avoidance of doubt, a player playing down, cannot play as a pitcher and catcher on the same weekend.

Pitching Development Exception

- Players are limited to pitching 9 innings at a lower level across one season.
- Players playing down may only pitch 3 innings per weekend as a maximum at a lower level.
- A team may only have one player, playing down, pitch per weekend.
- Following the completion of the pitching outing, the player may move to take a position in the field in that game (excluding Catcher position). They cannot play in another game that day.

Catching Development Exception

- Players playing down may only catch a maximum of one game per weekend.
- Players may only appear as a catcher in the field for that game.
- A team may only have one player, playing down, play as catcher per weekend.

SECTION FOUR - PLAYOFF ELIGIBILITY

For players to be eligible for Postseason Playoffs (National Baseball Championships), they must have played in a minimum of 33% of games. For the avoidance of doubt, games played within the same club at a lower or higher level will count towards their percentage of games played. For example, Player X plays 7 games in Division 2, and 3 games in Division 3. Player X has played 10 games in total and this number is utilised for assessing playoff eligibility.

Teams may apply for waivers relating to postseason eligibility in special circumstances to the League Commissioner (senior.leagues@britishbaseball.org.uk). An example of a special circumstance could be an injury sustained that prevented a player from fulfilling the necessary number of games played. Due to the possible sensitive/private nature of such special circumstances, any decision of approving/rejecting a waiver request lies solely with the assigned, independent Commissioner, and the reasoning for such is not made public to other clubs. It is important to note that any waiver request should be made with supporting evidence (e.g. a doctor's note in the case of an injury).

SECTION FIVE - PENALTIES FOR MISUSE OF PLAYER MOVEMENT RULES

Clubs found to be abusing the player movement system and/or breaking any of the above rules, will face penalties at the absolute discretion of the relevant Commissioner(s), which could include (but not limited to) fines, forfeits, point deductions, suspension of offending players/managers, disqualification from playoffs.

22. TEAMS AND PLAYER RESTRICTIONS

Teams may have up to a maximum of 30 players on a roster. Any team with more than 30 players must still be rostered on-line and the BBF needs to be advised on the reasoning and first approve the exceeded roster limit, by e-mail promptly to senior.leagues@britishbaseball.org.uk. Any overflow of more than 30 players on a team may be recorded.

The Senior Leagues Committee reserves the right to impose any restrictions deemed necessary on players rostered to a team where the league level is lower than the player's known level of ability. Instances where a known, higher level player is utilised in a way that provides a significant competitive advantage and is against the spirit of the game/development, may incur penalties. This is to ensure fair competition and to prevent abuse.

23. PARTICIPANT REGISTRATION AND ROSTERING REQUIREMENTS

The British Baseball Federation adheres to data protection rules. All participants are being asked to provide us your personal details for the following reasons (but not exhaustive):

- For reasons as laid out in our privacy policy.

- So we have a record of you in case of an insurance claim or query. Only players registered with the BBF are covered by our club and team participants' insurance.
- To cross-reference in the future if there is an issue i.e., player eligibility for the post- season, enforcement action or if the participant (official, player, or coach) is allowed to take part in our leagues. Administrators, coaches, players, officials and volunteers must register.
- Players playing in our seniors' divisions under the age of 18 must have their parent or guardian register for them.

The BBF reserves the right to turn down any participants application for any reason.

All clubs are to ensure their players register each season and to have only rostered their players on the BBF stats website (<https://stats.britishbaseball.org.uk/>) following each respective player having successfully registered with the BBF as a participant via Sport:80 ([Sport : 80 — British Baseball Federation](#)).

Clubs may register new players (i.e. previously unregistered with any club that season) throughout the year.

Players that owe fees to an affiliated club may not register and/or play for any other club in BBF competitions until the debt of fees to the former club is cleared, without permission from the club that is the creditor. Any suspension request by a club (creditor) regarding a player's debt of fees should be submitted by email to senior.leagues@britishbaseball.org.uk alongside evidence of owed fees.

Players may not appear in League games unless they have been added to the online roster of their team, at least 24 hours before the game, e.g. a player must be activated in the team roster no later than Saturday at 12pm in order to be eligible to play on Sunday at 12pm. If a team fields an ineligible player, an automatic forfeit win will be awarded to their opponents.

It shall be the responsibility of the opposing team to bring such violation of these rostering rules to the attention of the relevant Senior League Committee not later than 48 hours after the game.

If you need guidance on any part of the registration process, contact the BBF, at registrations@britishbaseball.org.uk.

24. MINIMUM AGE REQUIREMENT

Any player aged 14 years or older in the calendar year of the occurring season may participate in the BBF Senior Leagues. For example, a player that turns 14 in any month of 2026 may participate in the leagues, but not a player that turns 14 in the following calendar year (2027). In line with child welfare guidelines, parental/guardian approval must be obtained prior to a player under the age of 18 years playing senior baseball.

Furthermore, a thorough review of the players ability (emotionally, skill and physically) should be assessed by the team/club or parent before entering him or her into our senior leagues. Proper consideration should be taken to ensure the under 18 player is in a safe environment. The parent/guardian must understand that they are aware that their child is playing on a team that contains adults who may have better skills and that the player and parent/guardian recognise the

risks implied and therefore waive their right to raise a claim against the other team members, the coach, the club or the Officials of the BBF.

25. ADMISSION TO GAMES

Visiting players and coaches shall have free admission to games.

26. COMPETITION ADMINISTRATION, RESCHEDULING AND FORFEITS

All competition structures must be approved by the Senior Leagues Committee. A team shall participate in whichever league/division shall be designated by the Committee as determined, if necessary, through consultation with a club. All BBF senior games shall be played according to the schedules produced and published by BBF, unless the relevant Senior League Commissioner has given prior explicit agreement.

Each club is fully responsible for their own ground, traveling, accommodation and playing expenses.

The cut-off for notification that a team cannot play a scheduled game (forfeit) is 12 noon on Thursday, or 72 hours before the start time (whichever is earlier). Failure to adhere to this timing could result in the team canceling the game being liable to cover the expenses of the other side.

Any team that forfeits four or more scheduled games per season is automatically disqualified from National Baseball Championships (NBCs) and their full season results are disregarded for all teams within their pool for purposes of calculating playoff seeds.

A team that forfeits a game to an opponent will be subject to a fine of £50 per game. This will be paid to the opposing club. It is the onus/responsibility of the team entitled to the fine to decide whether they wish to pursue it and if so, invoice the offending team within 14 days. If a team forfeits a playoff game this amount will increase to £200 per day. An invoice that goes unpaid by the offending team longer than 30 days may be subject to further penalties at the discretion of the Senior Leagues Committee.

27. RAIN-OUTS AND POSTPONED GAMES

By way of background, a rain-out is a game which is either canceled, postponed or suspended because of weather conditions. A rain-out can also occur after the game has started; at this point, the game is "called". If the weather forecast and/or field conditions indicate that a game could be rained off, the home team is responsible for updating the visiting team and scorers and umpires (if applicable) of the conditions the evening prior to game day.

The decision of declaring a game unplayable due to weather (prior to the exchange of lineup cards at the Plate Meeting) should be established by the home team manager in consultation with an umpire (if available). The decision of declaring a game unplayable due to weather (after the exchange of lineup cards at the Plate Meeting) should be established by the umpire-in-chief.

Team contact details can be accessed via the League Contacts section on the BBF website or by request to the Seniors Leagues Committee. For rainouts, If conditions improve, the game is

resumed as soon as conditions permit and played until its conclusion; this is also called a rain delay.

Common sense must be used at all times, games should not be postponed casually due to weather or impending weather, but proper consideration must be given to traveling teams.

IMPORTANT: All scheduled games must be completed by the end date of the regular season unless otherwise stipulated by the Senior Leagues Committee.

28. INCIDENTS AND EJECTIONS

Umpires and Managers must submit a report of any incident/ejection/disciplinary matter within 48 hours concerning members of either team/officials crews, on or off the field of play.

The form to submit the report can be found via <https://britishbaseball.org.uk/forms/> or by email request to senior.leagues@britishbaseball.org.uk.

Any participant ejected from Game 1 of a doubleheader, is ineligible to participate in Game 2.

29. RISK ASSESSMENTS BEFORE EACH GAME

Before each game, the home team should conduct a risk assessment of their grounds for safety and insurance purposes. For example, but not exhaustive:

- Risk identification, assessment, and mitigation of the field (cars parked near the field should be kept far away from the fields, dugouts should be inspected, the fields should be inspected for any foreign object which may cause injury, field equipment check, and all fences should be checked).
- Health and safety program design and responsibilities (especially when youths are involved). Event risk analysis (i.e., you should always try to mitigate your risks).
- Contingency planning in case of an emergency (first aid kit, ice, contact details of the nearest hospital with A&E, emergency contact details for every participant in case who to contact for emergencies, and water on the field).
- Venue safety (bathrooms) checks.
- Incident notification and management report responsibilities should be assigned to one person. They should contact the BBF promptly of any incident or emergency occurring on the field.
- Emergency response and evacuation planning. Weather check.
- Know your responsibilities and liability under the BBF insurance i.e., check your club insurance certificate.
- Cancellation/abandonment/postponement plan i.e. for whatever reason (weather) who to contact from opposing team, officials and BBF.
- Contingency (non-appearance, adverse weather}, i.e. reschedule game(s). Lost and found responsibility.
- Communication plan in case of an emergency, postponement, cancellation, emergency, or incident. For example, who, what and how to communicate.
- Each home team should provide an L-Screen that affords reasonable protection and must be used to protect pitchers during batting practice. Where the home team is not playing at its regular ground, it remains the responsibility of the team acting as the home team to

ensure an L-Screen is available. If no L-Screen is available neither team will be allowed to take batting practice.

30. SCORE-KEEPING AND RESULTS OF GAMES

Baseball score-keeping is the practice of recording the details of a baseball game as it unfolds. Scorers in the BBF are typically volunteers for the home team. In special circumstances the BBF assigns scorekeepers to specific games.

All teams will continue to make use of the WBSC 'Ballclubz' scoring app which will provide game day statistics and results for games on the BBF's stats website. The home team is responsible to ensure their game is scored in the baseball Ballclubz app. It is possible for games to be scored manually on pen and paper and inputted (re-scored) using the Ballclubz app within three (3) days of the game, e.g. if the game takes place on a Sunday, the game should be scored on the app and uploaded to the site by Wednesday at 11:59pm. Failure to do so will result in a forfeit loss to the violating team. The home team is responsible to ensure the scheduled game is scored by a competent person through the Ballclubz App. The BBF reserve the right to penalise any team in any manner deemed necessary for not scoring their respective game(s) to a sufficient standard.

General knowledge:

- Print block legibly.
- Home team scorer is the official scorer and recorder for statistics for the game.
- All teams should keep their score-book/scoring data until the end of the season. If there is a query by the BBF, a respective team will be assumed to be able to recall their score-book/scoring data for reference.

31. GAME LENGTH

All adult double headers will be seven innings as allowed by OBR 7.01 (a) unless otherwise stipulated by the Senior League Committee (e.g., if games are time limited). For example, all double-header fixtures shall comprise two games of maximum seven innings per game (plus extra innings if necessary).

The gap between the finish of game one and the start of game two will be no more than 30 minutes, mutually agreed by the team managers and umpires so long as it does not impact on the published schedules. If the team managers and umpires can not agree on the length of time between games, the umpires will decide the length of time.

For run-limited innings, each half-inning of the game (except for the final inning) will be called complete when either three outs are called, or five runs are scored, whichever occurs first. In the case of five runs being scored, the half-inning will be deemed over when the runner makes contact with home plate to score the fifth run (the ONLY exception to this rule is that if an automatic double or a home run (excluding inside the park home runs) occurs, all runners that touch the plate on the play count regardless of which one is the fifth run). The final inning will be open - called complete when the third out is made.

The umpire will be responsible for all time keeping throughout fixtures. The umpires' decisions on timings will be unchallengeable.

The table below details time limits and run limits for each level:

Level	No New Inning After	Max Runs Per Half Inning	Max Time Between Games of a Doubleheader
Division 5	1hr 45mins*	5 (except final inning)	30 mins
Division 4	1hr 45mins*	5 (except final inning)	30 mins
Division 3	2hr 15mins	N/A	30 mins
Division 2	N/A	N/A	30 mins
NBL	N/A	N/A	30 mins

*Each game will be limited by time in that no new inning will be started 1hr 45 mins after the start time of the game. To ensure that the last inning is played as open, the umpire will make the call at 1hr 30 mins that the next inning will be the last inning and it will be open.

32. NBL REPRESENTATION IN WBSC EUROPE CUP COMPETITIONS

The winner of the NBL championship series will take the top seed regarding WBSC Europe Cup Competitions for the following year. The second seed will be taken by the team that loses the championship series. If either team is unable to compete in the following years European Cup Competitions their replacement will be decided by the Senior Leagues Committee.

33. RECORD KEEPING

Teams are expected to keep orderly and legible records (player statistics, game reports, scoring and game records) which may be provided promptly to the BBF upon request. Further in particular to ascertain that the club, team, or participant (player, official, or volunteer) has complied with all obligations with respect to the BBF rules, UKAD doping rules, insurance terms and guidelines.

34. TRANSFER RULES

For a player transfer request, the following rules apply:

- May do so once per season.
- Must not have been approached by another club or any of its members or representatives enticing him or her to transfer away, without that club first contacting the player's current club and seeking their agreement.
- Players may not transfer whilst they owe any money to a former or current club.
- After a player has played a game in a senior league game. They are to be considered as rostered to that team. If they subsequently play for another club, they will be considered as ineligible for that second club.
- Can only do so during the playing season when there are no transfer restrictions as follows: In the National Baseball League (NBL), during the two-week transfer window which is two weeks immediately before the 45% completion point of the scheduled season, which is

notified to clubs. A player can move outside of these two weeks, but can only practice, not play for the new club.

- A transfer request shall be sent by email to senior.leagues@britishbaseball.org.uk. Copies of the transfer request will be sent to the original club, the new club and the BBF. It is the responsibility of the new club to contact the current club management (President, Secretary or similar) prior to the transfer request being submitted to the BBF. The original club may either reject or approve the transfer request, but must provide a valid reason submitted to the Senior Leagues Committee for rejection. If the transfer request is approved by the original club, the BBF must then also approve the transfer request. If the original club does not respond to the transfer request within 7 days, the transfer request will be reviewed and decided upon by the Senior Leagues Committee. If the new club does not follow the above process a penalty fee of £30 might be levied by the BBF. Forfeits will be applied to games in which the player participated.
- When a registered participant owes money to any BBF affiliated club then their transfer request will not be considered until the debt is repaid in full.
- Players can only transfer once in the same season between affiliated clubs.

Note: WBSC has introduced athlete transfer rules between clubs affiliated with different National Federations. Please refer to [WBSC announces new Athlete Transfer Rules to come into effect in 2025](#) for the full details and the relevant PDF document links which explain the process in full.

35. INTER CLUB AFFILIATION

BBF Club members can form affiliations with other BBF clubs only, concerning player movement. If two clubs with teams in different divisions wish to develop an official affiliation and are approved by the BBF in writing by the League Commissioner, players in the club in question can move up and down by the current intra-club player movement rules.

Clubs wishing to form such affiliation must do so by e-mail application to their respective BBF League Commissioner. For example, Club X has only one team in its organisation, playing in Division 3. Club Y has two sides, one in Division 2 and one in Division 4. If the clubs form an official affiliation, players from Club X can play for Club Y's Division 2 and Division 4 teams, Club Y's Division 4 players can play for Club X's Division 3 team and Club Y's Division 2 players can play for Club X's Division 3 team. Both BBF clubs must register their teams separately with the BBF, and for the avoidance of doubt, the affiliation does not confer any rights or liabilities on the other club. The teams must play under their existing and separate names. Fees separately apply.

36. INTERNATIONAL COMPETITIONS

All International games and European competitions shall be run by the rules of the WBSC . Note: Youth baseball tournaments by the applicable local international tournament organisers. International teams playing in the UK must seek their insurance and are not covered by the BBF insurance. The UK host organisers are liable for any breach to the mentioned (in case of an injury or damage to property). Further, when a BBF club travels abroad, they should seek additional travel insurance as this is not part of the standard BBF club and player insurance. No BBF team or affiliated person may play, organise or sanction a game against an international team without the written permission of the BBF.

37. PRE-GAME RULES AND TIMINGS

Before the scheduled start time of the game, the scorer(s) will receive team line-up cards from each manager. The line ups shall contain both first and surnames as listed on the team's roster on the BBF website. Both managers will also provide team line-ups to the umpire, and the home team shall also provide the necessary quantity of game balls. The umpire and both managers will discuss ground rules.

At the home plate conference, each manager must declare any players:

- Playing down via player movement rules from a higher league team within the club.
- Playing across via player movement rules from a team within the same league.
- Players subject to a pitch count limit (aged under 23).
- Players subject to permitted use of specific bats (e.g. women/under 16s).

If notification of any of the above four declarations are not made, the opposing team can request a forfeit by email to senior.leagues@britishbaseball.org.uk.

NOTE: The following times are a guide based on the start time of the game. For example, if a game is scheduled to begin one hour before the standard start time, each topic below should begin one hour earlier, as appropriate. The responsibility to keep to the below schedule is the responsibility of both managers. Complaints will be handled accordingly by the senior leagues committee. Teams may mutually agree to alter the below schedule as they see fit.

Where more than two games are scheduled on one diamond in one day, there will be no assigned times for batting practice.

ID	TOPIC	TIMES	DURATION
1	Home team batting practice	10:15am-10:50am	35 minutes
2	Away team batting practice	10:50am-11:25am	35 minutes
3	Home team fielding warmup	11:25am-11:35am	10 minutes
4	Away team fielding warmup	11:35am-11:45am	10 minutes
5	Team managers to hand lineups to scorer	11:45am	N/A
6	Groundskeeping	11:45am-11:55am	10 minutes
7	Home plate meeting	11:55am-12:00pm	5 minutes
8	Game time	12:00pm	Play Ball!

38. HOME PLATE MEETINGS

Things to cover:

- Managers should exchange a copy of their line-up to the umpire (in duplicate) and confirm there are no final changes. If there are changes to the line-up card, ensure the change gets

onto both managers' copies and also that the changes go to the scorekeeper. Then, ensure that line-ups are exchanged. At this point the line-ups are official.

- Each line-up card presented to the umpire-in-chief should list the fielding positions to be played by each player in the batting order. If a designated hitter is to be used, the line-up card shall identify which hitter is to be the designated hitter.
- Coaches should confirm that their players are properly equipped and that all equipment is regulation.
- The umpire-in-chief shall make sure that the original and copies of the respective batting orders are identical, and then tender a copy of each batting order to the opposing manager. The copy retained by the umpire shall be the official batting order. The tender of the batting order by the umpire shall establish the batting orders. After that, no substitutions shall be made by either manager, except as provided in the rules. boundaries for the field of play, and where dead-ball territory begins. before doing so.
- As soon as the home team's batting order is handed to the umpire-in-chief, the umpires are in charge of the playing field, and from that moment the umpire-in-chief shall have sole authority to determine when a game shall be called, suspended or resumed on account of weather or the condition of the playing field.
- Go over ground rules for the field. Typically, the home team manager will go over the ground rules. In some cases (for example, at tournaments on neutral fields), the umpires may receive the ground rules in advance from the tournament director. In this case, you should go over the ground rules yourself at the plate meeting. If your field is not fully enclosed, be sure to clarify boundaries for the field of play, and where dead-ball territory begins.
- Cover special rules, if any (for example, define tournament rules, league rules, etc., if any apply).
- Insist that both teams play with the highest regard for sportsmanship. Remind the coaches that they, and only they, can call on the umpire to discuss a call and that they should wait for the action to stop and then ask for time before doing so.

39. START TIMES

Unless otherwise notified or scheduled, each first game of a doubleheader, or a single game, will have a start time of 12pm.

Team managers can liaise to alter the start times where convenient. However, if there is a dispute, then the start times that have been assigned shall prevail.

As many teams share grounds, a number of game start times may need to be adjusted. In most cases, alternative start times will already be part of the schedule and are therefore set. Where this is not the case, an attempt should be made to agree start times between the teams involved. This may also involve time-limiting games with any alterations to official league game details to be mutually agreed by managers.

If the teams cannot agree, the matter should be referred to the League Committee for a decision as a last resort.

40. RESOLVING TIES IN STANDINGS

The BBF will apply the following criteria for resolving final positions in the league or divisional standings in situations where two or more teams finish in a tie.

- A. Higher winning percentage: For example, (i) if a team's season record is 30 wins and 20 losses, the winning percentage would be 60% or 0.600. (ii) If a game ends up in a tie (e.g., after eight innings the game is called because of rain or darkness, it is considered a tie game and will be recorded as such). The number of wins plus half the number of ties, divided by the total number of games.
Example: Team A: 3-0-1 (one tie) = .875 winning percentage Team B: 3-1-0 (one loss) = .750
Note: If two teams are tied on Winning Percentage and have played a different number of games, the Games Back tiebreaker is used as a mini-breaker. Thus, a team at 4-0 will be placed ahead of a team at 3-0, because the team at 3-0 is considered .5 games back.
- B. The team that has forfeited the fewest number of games during the season is placed first; the team that has forfeited the next fewest number of games is placed second and so on.
- C. If still level, then the head-to-head results between the tied teams should be used to establish placing.
- D. If still level, then the team that has conceded the fewest runs in games between or among the tied teams is placed first, the team that has conceded the next fewest number of runs in those games is placed second, and so on.
- E. If still level, then the average number of runs per game conceded excluding games involving forfeits, by the tied teams across the whole of the league season should be used to determine to place.

Any instance not specifically covered in this section would result in a decision made by the League Committee.

41. MANAGERS GAME REPORTS AND UMPIRE SCORECARDS

We encourage all Managers to complete a report promptly (within 48 hours of the game) and as often as required as the feedback will help the league and umpires to understand and address the needs of teams.

Managers **must** submit a report of any incident/ejection/disciplinary matter within 48 hours concerning members of either team/officials crews, on or off the field of play.

Umpire scorecards play a crucial role in recognising positive performances while also identifying areas for development, helping to drive the continuous improvement of umpiring standards across all levels of the game.

Each team manager or representative **must** submit an umpire scorecard covering the entire game day for the plate umpire(s) and the field umpire(s), by midnight on the Wednesday following the fixture. This can now be done on a single form.

Failure to do so will result in sanctions.

The relevant forms can be found here: <https://www.britishbaseball.org.uk/forms>.

42. SPECIAL EVENT COSTS

When special events occur in the schedules - i.e. league games scheduled for multiple teams on the same day or weekend at the same venue - this is how the costs should be split by the teams involved:

- The Host Team is responsible for the cost of the field(s). If there is no host team (where the venue is neutral), all teams share the cost of the field(s).
- The Visiting Teams are accountable for their travel costs.
- All teams will be responsible for dividing up equally the cost of umpires officiating throughout the weekend.
- Each Visiting Team is responsible for paying its share of the umpire costs to the Host Team.
- The Host Team will be responsible for paying each umpire and recouping the charges from the Visiting Teams.
- Each Team will be responsible for providing the required amount of official game balls to the umpire for the game they are the home team and must also ensure that enough game balls are available to complete the game.
- The Official Scorer shall be paid by his or her Team.

43. UMPIRES (SEE UMPIRE HANDBOOK IF APPLICABLE)

The BBF is responsible for appointing umpires for select BBF league games and competitions. Where only one BBF-appointed umpire is present, the home team shall endeavor to provide a base umpire. Teams cannot refuse league appointed umpires.

Home teams shall provide a minimum of one umpire where no BBF-appointed umpire is available, whether this is a player or an independent umpire. As such, clubs must have a set of appropriate umpiring equipment available for use (catcher's gear is not suitable).

Where only one umpire is officiating, this umpire must be a home plate umpire, and not umpire from behind the pitcher's mound.

Teams at NBL should expect 2 umpires on a weekly basis and budget accordingly.

All games must be umpired by level 6 qualified umpires (or higher). It is the clubs responsibility to ensure that there are sufficient members attending umpire courses.

IMPORTANT: Umpires are external contractors, not employees of the BBF. Umpires charge a fee and pass-through costs (travel) to officiate games.

For dress code for BBF appointed umpires please refer to BBF umpire handbook.

Umpires' qualification level shall be graded on an ongoing basis by the Umpire Director/Umpire Training Coordinator.

All Clubs should report their umpire assignments to the league's respective Assistant Umpire Director, or by emailing umpiring@britishbaseball.org.uk

Umpires' requests for payment should be settled no later than 30 days from the date of the request, unless an umpire has specified alternative terms that allow for later payment.

If the BBF is notified by an umpire that a payment has not been made within this timeframe, the BBF will settle the amount directly and issue an immediate invoice to the club concerned, including an administrative charge of £50. Further sanctions may be applied at the discretion of the Senior Leagues Committee.

Please see the agreed fee rates for 2026 here: <https://www.britishbaseball.org.uk/officials>

44. TECHNICAL COMMISSIONERS

Where a Technical Commissioner (TC) is appointed by the British Baseball Federation (BBF) to a game or tournament (the “Event”), the TC acts as the official representative of the BBF and is responsible for ensuring that the Event is conducted in accordance with BBF regulations, competition rules, and all applicable policies, including safeguarding and anti-doping requirements in line with UK Sport procedures.

The TC has overall oversight of the technical and organisational delivery of the Event and is empowered to take decisions necessary to protect its integrity and proper conduct.

Where practicable, the TC shall convene a pre-event technical meeting on the day preceding the start of the Event. Attendance shall be mandatory for at least one authorised representative of each participating team and for the full umpiring crew. At this meeting, the TC shall formally present and clarify the applicable competition rules, technical regulations, eligibility requirements, protest procedures, safeguarding and anti-doping obligations, and any event-specific ground rules or administrative matters. The purpose of this meeting is to ensure uniform understanding, consistency of application, and the orderly conduct of the Event from its commencement.

The TC shall arrive at the Event venue no later than 120 minutes prior to the scheduled start time. Upon arrival, the TC shall inspect the field of play to ensure it meets all applicable competition and safety requirements and shall liaise with the grounds crew or event organisers to confirm that any deficiencies are remedied in a timely manner. The TC shall also review all relevant facilities - including dugouts, changing areas, sanitary provisions, and areas designated for officials - to ensure they are safe, clean, and ready for use by the participating teams and officials.

During the Event, the TC shall position themselves to effectively oversee game operations, including access to the designated officials’ area. The TC shall work in cooperation with the umpiring crew, scorers, and event organisers, ensuring that all technical aspects of the game are administered correctly. While umpires retain sole authority over on-field decisions under the rules of baseball, the TC shall adjudicate any disputes and formal protests arising during the Event that fall within the scope of BBF competition regulations. All protests must be submitted in accordance with the regulations in this Handbook and resolved on the day of the Event in accordance with the applicable procedures. The TC’s decision on such matters shall be final and binding, subject only to any appeal rights expressly provided for under BBF regulations.

During tournament events or multiple-game days, the TC shall also monitor weather conditions and field integrity between games, liaising with the umpire-in-chief, the grounds crew and event organisers as necessary, and shall have authority to delay and suspend games or adjust scheduling in the interest of player safety and the orderly conduct of the Event.

The TC shall submit a report to the BBF following the Event. The report shall include observations on event organisation and hosting arrangements, playing facilities and field conditions, team

conduct, officiating standards, equipment compliance, spectator arrangements where relevant, and any incidents, disputes, or disciplinary matters arising. The TC may also make recommendations for improvement or further action where necessary.

As the BBF's appointed delegate, the TC is authorised to address any administrative or regulatory matters not covered by on-field rules and to advise clubs and officials on their obligations under BBF regulations.

Travel and subsistence expenses shall be reimbursed in accordance with BBF policy and as agreed in advance.

45. MEDIA OR PUBLIC RELATIONS

Any registered participant or person or persons representing a club or affiliated organisation should notify marketing@britishbaseball.org.uk of an appearance on a television or radio broadcast in any connection with baseball.

The BBF Board shall have the sole and exclusive right to negotiate on behalf of each league, club or team, the television coverage of baseball games, played in the United Kingdom by clubs or persons affiliated to or registered with the BBF. The right may be delegated to a league, club or team at the absolute discretion of the BBF, but no league, club or team shall have the right to grant to any other person or organisation whether or not they be affiliated to the BBF, the authority to negotiate television coverage. The BBF reserves all rights to the videotaping or filming of all games under its jurisdiction. All benefits related to the sale of rights to broadcasting, (radio, television, internet, videotaping or filming, cable TV), or any other media-related rights to any baseball game played under the jurisdiction of the BBF belong wholly and exclusively to the BBF.

46. BBF USE OF IMAGES AND RECORDINGS

The BBF has exclusive rights to broadcast, take images and recordings of all practices, games, or events throughout the year. Each club is required at the beginning of the year to adhere to allow the BBF the above and to ensure all of their participants agree.

The British Baseball Federation (BBF) reserves the right to use any photograph/video taken at any event involving its members or organised (directly or indirectly), without the expressed written permission of those included within the photograph/video. The BBF may use the photograph/video in publications or other media material produced, used, or contracted by the BBF including but not limited to brochures, invitations, books, newspapers, magazines, television, websites, etc.

A person attending a BBF event who does not wish to have their image recorded for distribution should make their wishes known to the photographer, and/or the event organizers, and/or contact the BBF at info@britishbaseball.org.uk Subject line: IMPORTANT NO IMAGES.

By participating in a BBF event or by failing to notify BBF, in writing (but with a confirmation reply), your desire to not have your photograph used by BBF, you are agreeing to release, defend, hold harmless and indemnify BBF from any and all claims involving the use of your picture, or recording or likeness.

Any person or organisation not affiliated with BBF may not use, copy, alter or modify BBF photographs, graphics, videography or other, similar reproductions or recordings without the advance written permission of an authorised designee from the British Baseball Federation (BBF).

Thank you for your understanding and cooperation!

47. GREAT BRITAIN NATIONAL TEAMS

The Great Britain Baseball national team programmes are overseen by the BBFs National Teams Programme Official who manages GB Baseball's structure and operational matters separately. Where a BBF league team has five (5) or more players unavailable for a BBF league game because of national team duty, then the team may apply to their League Commissioner to have their games rescheduled. Every effort will be made to ensure that national team duty will not negatively impact regular season games, but re-scheduling cannot be guaranteed, and the decision of the League Commissioner will be final.

48. CODES OF CONDUCT

All participants in British baseball are to adhere to the codes of conduct set out from time to time. Codes of conduct exist for players, coaches, officials and other club members and supporters and will be published on the BBF website. It is the responsibility of everybody involved in your club to ensure it remains a safe place, free from discrimination, fear and where possible, risk. If not, the club is subject to enforcement action. The Code of Conduct can be found on the relevant page of the BBF website: <https://www.britishbaseball.org.uk/federation-documents>

49. ENFORCEMENT PROCESS

We have an extensive range of disciplinary and enforcement powers to take action against a member and non-members clubs and individuals who are failing or have failed to meet the BBF rules, code of conduct, policies, processes, and standards we require. We take any misconduct or abuse on any official, player, coach, fan, very seriously. This is not intended to provide an exhaustive explanation of our actions, investigation and the enforcement process (if warranted). The Enforcement Process can be found on the relevant page of the BBF website: <https://www.britishbaseball.org.uk/federation-documents>

Note: The BBF reserves the right to make public any Enforcement action as a matter of disclosure. Any lack of cooperation by the person(s) involved will be considered in our review and subsequent enforcement action (if warranted). If your club, team or yourself is under an Enforcement review, we ask you to refrain from any statements publicly (direct or indirect) relating to the above while our review is taking place. We further, remind you any further misconduct will be considered and added to any of our Enforcement actions.

50. UK-AD ANTI DOPING RULES

The anti-doping rules of British Baseball Federation are the UK Anti-Doping Rules published by UK Anti-Doping Limited (or its successor), as amended from time to time. Such rules shall take effect and be construed as rules of the British Baseball Federation.

To view Anti-Doping Rules, click the following link www.ukad.org.uk/anti-doping-rules

OTHER INFORMATION, GUIDELINES AND RULES

DAMAGE TO PROPERTY

The organisers of an event or game (e.g., home team) are liable for any damage caused to the property, field, or venue where the game or event is taking place.

FIRE - SAFETY - HEALTH

The organiser or home team agrees to accept full responsibility for compliance with local, council, and city, Fire, Safety, and Health Ordinances regarding the installation and operation of equipment.

CANCELLATIONS

All cancellations must be received in writing for the event and copied the BBF. BBF INSURANCE
You agree to read and adhere to all terms of the BBF insurance. Any breach of the terms you hold the BBF, its officials, volunteers not liable for any damages, liability, or costs. The BBF insurance only covers affiliated clubs, teams, and their registered participants. If you play against other unaffiliated clubs or teams, their participants are not covered by the BBF insurance. Thus, always check the other affiliated clubs, teams, and participants have their own insurance. If you are hosting international participants, teams, coaches again the BBF insurance will not cover them. Visiting international clubs, teams, participants, coaches, etc., should carry their own insurance.

SAFEGUARDING

BaseballSoftballUK is the lead contact for any Safeguarding issues, including DBS checks, training and support for the BBF and all other chartered clubs. If you have any specific Safeguarding support concerns or questions, please contact BSUK at welfare@bsuk.com or visit <https://www.baseballsoftballuk.com/safeguarding>

Sources (not exhaustive):

MLB rule book

Pony Baseball rule book

Little League rule book

WBSC rules

UK-AD Anti-Doping rules

Wikipedia

ABOUT THE BRITISH BASEBALL FEDERATION

The British Baseball Federation (BBF) is the National Governing Body (NGB) of baseball in Great Britain. We promote equality in our sport, accept players from different age groups, cultures, orientation, nationalities, and skills.

The BBF is a proud member to the World Baseball Softball Confederation (WBSC) www.wbssc.org. The WBSC is the world governing body for the sports of baseball and softball.

The BBF as the NGB of our sport, are designated to control and regulate the environment of the game of baseball.

There are six Senior Leagues in the BBF:

- National Baseball League (NBL) which is our top league.
- Division 2
- Division 3
- Division 4
- Division 5
- Women's Baseball League

There is also a development level where some clubs run 'leagues' within their own club for the purposes of entry level development. These are not within the scope of competitive league play and thus aren't included within the above senior leagues breakdown.

CLUB AFFILIATION

Clubs affiliate to the BBF under Article 4.3 of the BBF Constitution. An annual club registration process which takes place prior to each season and is notified to clubs who were affiliated to the BBF in the prior season.

Note: Clubs may request to apply for membership mid-season to the BBF but are not guaranteed league play.

All payments for club affiliations and insurance premiums shall be made electronically and or as detailed in the registration process published each year on the BBF website.

Clubs wishing to change their name must seek explicit approval to do so from the BBF by writing to the Seniors League Commissioner and copy the Secretary.

New clubs and their team(s) affiliating to the Federation shall not be permitted to use a name or logo, which is currently used by an existing affiliated club.

Clubs who wish to enter a single team into BBF leagues must register and sustain a minimum of 13 registered players for that team.

HOW CLUBS ARE EVALUATED AGAINST THRESHOLD CONDITIONS FOR MEMBERSHIP

Each club application is assessed on a case-by-case basis. In doing so, the BBF considers the following factors list (which is not exhaustive):

- Location of club and participants: the club must be located and the participants must be domiciled in the UK (for insurance purposes).
- Appropriate resources: this includes a club or its team wanting to take part in our leagues, to having access to a baseball playing field, capital adequacy requirements to pay your annual fees and run your clubs, as well as skilled individuals to run your club and teams. If

- you take part in our leagues, you must have access to officials who understand the rules.
- Ability for clubs to be supervised effectively: we make it clear that we expect clubs to be open and honest in their dealings with us. We take very seriously any non-disclosure of information that could impact our assessment and risk your insurance coverage. All participants of your club need to adhere to our rules, terms, constitution and conditions. Provide us details about your club and participants, so we can have a record for insurance purposes, assess the number of participants per club/team, adhere to safeguarding standards, and UK-AD Anti Doping Rules. It is important that you fully disclose to us any information that we ask for.
 - Clubs will need to carry out the necessary risk assessments for insurance purposes when required.
 - Adhere to and pay our fees on time.
 - Conduct: Individuals of the club to carry themselves to an appropriate manner i.e., both on and off the field (includes social media). Please refer to our Code of Conduct.
 - Club model: this refers to how the firm is run. For example, member clubs are expected to have a constitution, a proper way to communicate to their participants our terms and rules, to ensure everyone understands their responsibilities and is accountable for their actions. If your club does not have a constitution [click here](#) for a template.
 - Fitness and propriety of the Club and its individuals to perform the activities for which they seek membership on an annual basis.

Before, During and Post Game Guidelines (but not limited to):

BEFORE THE GAME

- Assign responsibilities
- Ensure you follow BSUK safeguarding policies and procedures where applicable.
- Check for any BBF or opposing team updates.
- Ensure all players are registered with the BBF.
- Ensure there is an umpire for the game.
- Inform umpire of any material information.
- Check the weather and condition of the field.
- Bring three or more new official baseballs for each game if you are the home team.
- Grounds-keeping.
- Communicate rosters and lineups to scorekeeper and opposing team.
- Take any corrective, marketing the game and communication actions.
- Check for eligible bats only.
- Ensure you are only playing against BBF clubs/teams/participants; Otherwise insurance coverage may be limited.
- Scorekeeper downloads Ballclubz App and tests it. Check the rosters are uploaded.
- Follow-up pre-game batting practice and fielding time-lines.
- Check for special rules.

DURING THE GAME

- Communicate changes to scorekeeper and umpire(s) to umpire.
- Once a game starts the umpire takes full control of the game (rain delay, calling the game, etc).
- Game timings are at the sole discretion of the umpire(s).
- Check if there are any youth pitchers? If so, they need to be identified as they have pitching limits for the game.
- Scorekeeper scores the game in the Ballclubz app. Check scores are going in properly.
- Follow BBF Code of Conduct and Handbook.
- Check rosters and batting orders are correct and lineups.
- Follow safeguarding policies and procedures where applicable.
- Check the scores between every half-inning.

AFTER THE GAME

- Show good sportsmanship e.g., exchange post game thank yous to opposing team, umpires and others.
- Pickup your equipment.
- Throw away rubbish.
- Follow-up on payment to umpire(s).
- Ensure your scores went into stats.britishbaseball.org.uk
- Complete and submit your post game report.



WHAT OFFENCES INCUR PENALTY POINTS?

OFFENCE

POINTS INCURRED

Missing or wrong scorecard – Including entering "Unknown" or only the first names for umpires		1
Using an Umpire who is not minimum Lvl6 qualified		2
Ejection (Type 1)		3
Failure to submit scores correctly on the app by the deadline		3
Forfeiting a match (other than due to a rain-out that is impossible or unviable to rearrange)		3
Pitch Smart violation identified by the SLC after the game		5
Ejection (Type 2)		6
Ejection (Type 3)		9
Disciplinary action following breaking the BBF social media policy		10
Playing a player not registered on either s:80 or MyWBSC		10
Using an Umpire who is not registered on s:80		10

PENALTY THRESHOLDS

25 PENALTY POINTS

Warning letter/email issued to club requesting a response within 7 days (late or no response will incur an immediate 25 point penalty)

50 PENALTY POINTS

Fine of £100 will be issued to that club and an online meeting will be arranged at the convenience of the SLC with the club Chair and team managers

75 PENALTY POINTS

Team will be issued with a two-game suspension which will be treated as a forfeit within the current rules (no additional penalty points will be incurred due to the forfeitures)

100 PENALTY POINTS

Fine of £200 and the following sanctions **MAY** be imposed:

- The imposition of an action plan
- Ineligibility for the post-season for that year
- The cancellation of all future games for the rest of the year
- The suspension or cancellation of that team's affiliation with the BBF for the rest of the season or indefinitely.

A subsequent charge may be brought against the club should they accumulate a set number of additional points, as determined by the SLC.

BBF DISCIPLINARY MATRIX 2026

IMPORTANT: The Disciplinary Matrix has been updated for the 2026 season, which aims to combat the level of abuse directed towards officials and to protect the integrity of the game. The matrix contains a range of incident examples that have been split into one of three categories.

Refer to the BBF Enforcement Process and BBF Code of Conduct here:

<https://www.britishbaseball.org.uk/federation-documents>

- All penalties to take effect immediately.
- All penalised persons have the right to appeal.
- Any suspension issued and not served in the playing year will be held over until the following season. It is the responsibility of the team's coach to make sure all suspensions are enforced. A record of all games played after the suspension is announced must be made available to BBF on request.
- Any fine not paid by the offending participant within 7 days of the Final Enforcement Notice being served will be passed onto the club that the participant is affiliated to and all teams within the club will not be eligible to play any scheduled league games until the fine is paid and the BBF confirm receipt of payment. League games affected by failure to pay fines will be assigned as forfeit losses.

Any questions on disciplinarys can be directed to senior.leagues@britishbaseball.org.uk

Below is the matrix which details the maximum penalties for actions described within each line item, with each offence separated into three categories - Type 1, 2, or 3.

Type 1 Offences (non-confrontational but actionable)						
			Suspension in number of games or duration			
ID	Type	Offender(s)	First offence	Subsequent	First offence Umpire	Subsequent Umpire
1.1	Ejection from a game	Any	2	4		
1.2	Throwing equipment in disgust of a call or result of play	Any	2	4		
1.3	Arguing a judgement call	Any	2	4		
1.4	Tobacco/E-Cigs/Vapes (or similar) use in the dugout or on-field	Any	2	4		
1.5	Use of an altered or non-approved bat	Batter	2	4		
1.6	Pitcher found to have foreign substance on their person	Pitcher	4	8		
1.7	Pitcher having doctored the ball	Pitcher	4	8		
1.8	Non-rostered player on the lineup card	Manager	2	4		
1.9	Any minor reportable incident not covered	Any	4	8	4	10

Type 2 Offences (confrontational or safety, short of physical abuse or violence)						
			Suspension in number of games or duration			
ID	Type	Offender(s)	First offence	Subsequent	First offence Umpire	Subsequent Umpire
2.1	Questioning the integrity of an umpire	Any	4	6		
2.2	Leaving a position to protest a judgment call	Any	4	6		
2.3	Causing a forfeit due to refusal to leave the playing area at the direction of an umpire (players have three minutes from the time of ejection to leave the playing area)	Any	4	8		
2.4	Alcohol/illegal drug use during a game	Any	6	10 or whole season	Whole season	Life
2.5	Verbal abuse directed towards an umpire/violent disapproval towards a judgment call	Any	6	10		
2.6	Gestures or words meant to incite opposition	Any	6	10		
2.7	Suspended player appears in the lineup	Manager, suspended player	8	Whole season		
2.8	Any confrontational but nonviolent reportable incident not covered	Any	8	Whole season	10	2 seasons

Type 3 Offences (abuse and/or violence)						
ID	Type	Offender(s)	Suspension in number of games or duration			
			First offence	Subsequent	First offence Umpire	Subsequent Umpire
3.1	Homophobia, transphobia, racism, ageism, religion, sexism, xenophobia, use of a disability or condition, or references to any proscribed group meant in code to incite, mock, ridicule, belittle, or dehumanise	Any	10	Whole season	Whole season	Life
3.2	Any intent to injure during a play	Any	10	Whole season		
3.3	Any attempt to clear the benches or instigate a confrontation	Any	10	Whole season		
3.4	Intentionally pitching at a batter	Pitcher, Manager	10	Whole season		
3.5	Fighting	Any	10	2 seasons	Whole season	Life
3.6	Physical contact of any type with the umpire, short of violence	Any	10	2 seasons		
3.7	Threatening or actual violence towards any manager, coach, player, spectator, or umpire, through gestures, words, or actions	Any	Life		Life	
3.8	Any abusive or violent reportable incident not covered	Any	Life		Life	

BBF DISCIPLINARY FINES 2026

Schedules of Fines						
	First Offence	Second Offence	Third Offence	Each Subsequent	First Offence, Umpire	Subsequent Offence, Umpire
Type 1	£40	£80	£120	X2	Forfeiture of two game fees to the BBF	X2
Type 2	£80	£160	£240	X2	Forfeiture of four game fees to the BBF	X2
Type 3	£160	£320	£640	X2	Forfeiture of ten game fees to the BBF	X2

IMPORTANT: Please note it is important that you pay your fine on time. If you fail to do so, you may face additional penalties or charges. The BBF does not grant deferment of payment i.e., all payments need to be paid in full. The BBF only accepts online wire transfers. For banking information please contact finance@britishbaseball.org.uk

Any questions on disciplinaries can be directed to senior.leagues@britishbaseball.org.uk

END OF BBF HANDBOOK