

South Dakota VFW Baseball Rules

12U

January 1, 2021

1. **VFW 16U and 14U** baseball rules will apply to all games unless a change is listed below.
2. Competition is open to boys and girls who are 12 and under years of age and eligible to play VFW Baseball. A boy or girl who has reached his or her 13th birthday by **January 1st** of the current year is not eligible for the 12 and under programs. There will be two classes A and B. Tournament sites and dates will be determined in advance by the Department of SD VFW Baseball Chairman and Director of Baseball Operations and then presented to Region Coordinators, Coaches and State VFW Officials during annual VFW Baseball Committee Meeting held in January. The number of teams that register and average daily membership (ADM) of the high school they are in will be factors when teams are placed in a class (see 16U and 14U General Rules for specifics).
3. A 12U Baseball team to be eligible for any tournament play must register online at sdvfwbaseball.com prior to **June 15th** with late registration accepted until **Jun 25th**. See 16U/14U eligibility for registration schedule and fees.
4. Team roster must have the following player information by **June 21st**: uniform number, first and last name, address/city of primary residence, school attended the last school year or will feed into for 12U and date of birth. Initial team rosters with complete player information, including school information, must be posted by **June 21st**. If your team roster doesn't have the information necessary to determine your class assignment, VFW Baseball reserves the right to move you to a higher class or disqualify the team without refund.
5. All games in the 12U division will be six (6) innings. The 10-run rule will be effect after 4 innings and the 15-run rule will be in effect after 3 innings. During pool play, no new inning will start after 1 hour 45 minutes. Ties in pool play only. Pool play should be completed on Friday to determine seeding. Non-pool play games will go extra innings if needed to determine the winner.
6. Bases will normally be 65 feet but can be (60-65) sixty to sixty-five feet apart. Pitching distance is normally 48 ft but can be between 44-48 ft or at appropriate proportional distance with base length as coordinated with VFW Baseball Chairman. All other distances must have a written waiver request or approved with the Host Tournament Bid Package by VFW Baseball Chairman.
7. Teams participating in 12U age division VFW Baseball sanctioned tournaments will be allowed one extra hitter and a designated hitter (IAW designated hitter rules) for any player or coach can bat the roster. If the coach elects to start the game roster batting, they must roster bat the entire game.
8. South Dakota VFW Baseball will apply, execute and enforce pitch count rules in addition to providing several age appropriate recommendations listed below. Pitch Smart ([USA Baseball's Pitch Smart Guidelines](#)) are a series of practical, age-appropriate guidelines to help parents, players and coaches avoid overuse injuries and foster long, healthy careers for youth pitchers.

VFW Baseball elected to establish these rules to ensure the safety, wellbeing and yet have fun while playing in VFW sponsored events. However, it's **ultimately the responsibility** of the coaches, parents and the athlete to ensure that the player follows the guidelines for his age group over the course of the year especially since they will often play in multiple leagues with different affiliations covering different times of the year.

- a. Pitch count limits and required rest recommendations (required for VFW sponsored events)

Age Division	Daily Max Pitch Count	Required Rest (Pitches)					
		0 Days	1 Days	2 Days	3 Days	4 Days	5 Days
11-12	85	1-25	26-35	36-50	51-65	66+	N/A

Exception: If a pitcher reaches the Daily MAX Pitch Count limit or “zero” days rest count imposed above for his/her age division while facing a batter, the pitcher may continue to pitch until any one of the following conditions occurs: 1. The batter reaches base; 2. That batter is put out; 3. The third out is made to complete the half-inning.

When identified, the days rest is in effect however, the total pitch count will carry over the Max Daily Pitch Count if the pitcher pitches another game the same day. For example, if the pitcher reaches 25 pitches but requires 30 pitches to finish the batter, the pitcher will qualify for “zero” rest days but have a daily pitch count of 30 thus impacting the number of pitches during his second outing on the same day.

NOTE 1: A pitcher who delivers **36** or more pitches in a game cannot play the position of catcher for the remainder of the day.

NOTE 2: Any player who has played the position of catcher in more than four innings in a calendar day is NOT eligible to pitch on that calendar day.

NOTE 3: Intentional walk: only pitches thrown by the pitcher will be counted (doesn't throw, doesn't count).

NOTE 4: A player may appear in a game as a pitcher for three consecutive days but will not exceed their zero days rest pitch count per day the first two days and the 1-days rest pitch count for the 3rd day. For example; 12U coach must identify “last batter” prior to reaching zero days rest pitch count of **25** (may finish the batter as detailed above) the first two days but the coach must identify “last batter” prior to reaching 1-days rest pitch count of **35** on the 3rd day (25, 25, **35**).

NOTE 5: Pitchers once removed from the mound will not return to the mound in the same game.

- b. 12U additional recommendations
 - i. Focus on athleticism, physical fitness and fun
 - ii. Focus on learning baseball rules, general techniques and teamwork
 - iii. Do not exceed 80 combined **innings** pitched in any 12-month period
 - iv. Take at least 4 months off from throwing every year, with at least 2-3 of those months being continuous
 - v. Make sure to properly warm up before pitching
 - vi. Set and follow pitch-count limits and required rest periods
 - vii. Avoid throwing pitches other than fastballs and change-ups

- viii. Avoid playing for multiple teams at the same time
 - ix. Avoid playing catcher while not pitching
 - x. Players should not pitch in multiple games on the same day
 - xi. Play other sports during the course of the year
 - xii. Monitor for other signs of fatigue
- c. For VFW sanctioned events, the host committee and/or the regional coordinator (or designee) is responsible for keeping the official pitch count. During VFW sanctioned games, both coaches, umpire crew chief (or designated official) and official book are responsible for keeping the pitch count. Between innings or as required, the coaches, umpire crew and official book (game changer app if used) will compare pitch count. The official book pitch count will be used as final. Disagreements on pitch count may be brought to the VFW Director of Operations or VFW Chairman for arbitration. When a pitcher has been discovered to have exceeded the above age appropriate daily max pitch count, they will be removed from the mound, IAW with the notes above, and allowed to play any position EXCEPT catcher. In addition, the player will be placed in rest status determined by the number of pitches performed.
9. Pitchers will be allowed **4** warm up pitches between innings. There is no balk rule, there will be no balks. If a pitcher takes another position on the field, he/she may not pitch again in that game.
10. Batter, base runners, bat boys, any players acting as base coach and any players out of the dugout must wear a helmet that covers both ears.
11. Catchers must wear protective headgear and throat protectors (hockey style mask), chest pad and catcher's cup. Warm-up catchers must wear protective headgear and throat protectors. This includes catchers warming up a pitcher.
12. Metal cleats are not allowed.
13. Bat requirements for 12U Age Division. All bats for 12U teams must be in accordance with USABAT Standard. The bat shall include the official stamp of the Little League Baseball organization or state Little League approved. See this [link for USABAT](#). Any illegal bats will be removed from the game and the batter is out.



14. Base running. Stealing is permitted, however, the runner cannot leave the base until the ball leaves the pitchers hand. The runner is out if he/she leaves the base early. The batter may run on a dropped third strike.
15. See 16U/14U Rule #5, Pace of Play for courtesy runner guidance.
16. Slide rule is in effect if a fielder has the ball before the run reaches 2nd, 3rd, or home. The runner is out if contact made, umpire discretion will be applied and decision is final.

17. You may replace starters during the game, but if he/she re-enters the game, he/she must go into the game for the player he/she was replaced by and also in the same spot in the batting. When the sub comes out, he/she is out of the game. In the event of a serious injury and there are no players left on the bench who have not played, the last player taken out may be placed back in the game in place of the injured player. In the alternative, in case of serious injury, a team may continue to play with eight players and the team will receive an automatic out when that player's turn to bat occurs.

South Dakota VFW Baseball Code of Sportsmanship

(It is recommended that this Code is recited by both teams before a game during the season. At regional and state tournaments, it is a requirement.)

- **Keep the rules.**
- **Keep faith with my teammates.**
- **Keep my temper.**
- **Keep myself fit.**
- **Keep a stout heart in defeat.**
- **Keep pride under control in victory.**
- **Keep a sound soul, a clean mind, and a healthy body.**