



NXT SPORTS USA

SUMMER LEAGUE

OFFICIAL RULE BOOK

2026 SEASON | VERSION 1.0

Regular Season + Single-Elimination Championship

LEAGUE STANDARD

Unless a division schedule or written supplement states otherwise, the standard format is eight regular-season games followed by a one-day championship.

All teams, coaches, players, and spectators are responsible for knowing and following these rules.

How to Use This Rule Book

These rules are adapted from the NXT Sports USA Official Tournament Rules and are modified for a multi-week summer league format. **A published division supplement, schedule notice, or written ruling from the NXT League Director controls when it conflicts with this book.**

Rule Priority

1) Written NXT division supplement or schedule notice; 2) this Summer League Rule Book; 3) Official Baseball Rules (OBR). The NXT League Director has final authority over league administration and interpretations.

Quick Reference

Division	Field	Regulation Innings	No New Inning	Weekly Pitching Limit
6U	40 / 60*	6	1:20	6 innings
7-8U	40 / 60	6	1:20	6 innings
9-10U	46 / 65**	6	1:30	6 innings
11-12U	50 / 70	6	1:30	6 innings
13U	54 / 80 or 60 / 90	7	1:45	7 innings
14U	60 / 90	7	1:45	7 innings

** 6U pitching method and distance are division-specific. ** 60-foot bases may be used if 65-foot bases are unavailable.*

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1. Governing Rules and League Authority

All NXT Summer League games are governed by Official Baseball Rules (OBR), except as modified by this rule book, a published division supplement, or a written ruling from NXT Sports USA.

The NXT League Director may interpret rules, correct administrative errors, adjust schedules, and make decisions necessary to protect player safety, competitive balance, and league operations. Administrative rulings are final.

2. League Format and Scheduling

Unless separately announced for a specific division, the standard league format is eight regular-season games followed by a one-day, single-elimination championship. Team count, field availability, weather, and division structure may require a different guarantee or playoff format.

- The official online schedule controls game dates, times, fields, and home/away assignments.
- Teams should be at the field and ready to play at least 15 minutes before the scheduled start time. A game may begin early when the field, umpires, and both teams are ready.
- Schedule requests are considered but are not guaranteed. NXT may move games between fields, days, or locations when necessary.
- A scheduled game that is forfeited by a team counts toward that team's game guarantee.
- The championship format may be modified to fit the number of teams in a division.

3. Player Eligibility and Age Cutoff

- Age cutoff: May 1. A player may not turn the next age level before May 1 of the current season.
- Players may play up in an older age division but may not play down.
- Up to two grade exceptions per roster are permitted with official school documentation.
- Managers must be able to produce the official roster, a birth certificate or passport, and a report card for any grade-exception player when requested.
- Failure to produce required eligibility documentation may result in the player being ruled ineligible.

4. Rosters and Multi-Team Participation

- Maximum roster size: 20 players.
- Rosters are frozen at the first pitch of the team's first league game unless the NXT League Director gives written approval for a change.
- There are no unregistered guest players. A player must appear on the official NXT roster before participating.
- A player may not be rostered on two teams in the same division.
- A player rostered in different age divisions may pitch for only one team during the same league week. A league week runs Monday through Sunday.
- During the championship event, a dual-rostered player may pitch for only one team. Once the player throws a pitch for Team A, the player is ineligible to pitch for Team B during that championship event.
- Use of an ineligible player results in the player's immediate removal and forfeiture of each game in which the player participated.

Manager Responsibility

The head coach must confirm that every player is properly registered and eligible before the player enters a game. Approval by an opposing coach or umpire does not make an ineligible player eligible.

5. Uniforms

- Jersey numbers are required and must be visible.
- Matching uniforms are recommended.
- A player must use the same uniform number for the entire league unless a change is reported to NXT before the game.
- Duplicate numbers should be corrected before the game whenever possible. The official scorekeeper must be notified if a duplicate cannot be corrected.

6. Field Dimensions

Age Division	Pitching / Base Distance
6U	40 / 60; pitching method and distance as posted
7-8U	40 / 60
9-10U	46 / 65; 60-foot bases if 65-foot bases are unavailable
11-12U	50 / 70
13U	54 / 80 or 60 / 90, as posted
14U	60 / 90

7. Game Length and Time Limits

The official game clock starts with the first pitch. An inning begins immediately when the third out of the prior inning is recorded. No new inning may begin after the applicable time limit, but an inning already in progress will be completed unless the home team is ahead and does not need to bat.

Division	Regulation Length	Regular Season / Early Bracket	Championship Game
6U-8U	6 innings	1:20 no new inning	2:00 no new inning
9U-12U	6 innings	1:30 no new inning	2:00 no new inning
13U-14U	7 innings	1:45 no new inning	2:20 no new inning

- Ties are permitted in regular-season games when the time limit has expired.
- NXT may shorten time limits because of weather, darkness, field restrictions, or schedule recovery.
- There is no minimum number of innings required when a game ends because of the time limit.

8. Mercy Rules and Inning Caps

- 20 runs after 2 completed innings.
- 15 runs after 3 completed innings.
- 10 runs after 4 completed innings.
- 8 runs after 5 completed innings.
- For 6U-8U, each half-inning has a 7-run cap until the final declared inning, which is open. The umpire and both managers should identify the open inning before it begins.
- A mercy rule ends the game immediately once the result is mathematically final.

9. Standings and Seeding

Regular-season standings are based on winning percentage so divisions remain fair if teams play an unequal number of completed games. A tie counts as one-half win and one-half loss for winning-percentage purposes.

- Seeding order: 1) winning percentage; 2) head-to-head result, when exactly two teams are tied; 3) fewest runs allowed; 4) run differential, capped at plus 7 per game; 5) runs scored; 6) coin flip or random draw.
- Head-to-head is skipped when three or more teams are tied or when tied teams did not all play the same head-to-head schedule.
- A forfeit is recorded as a 7-0 result for standings and tiebreaker purposes.
- NXT may use pool-based or adjusted seeding when the championship format requires it.

10. Championship Play and Tiebreakers

- The standard championship is a one-day, single-elimination event unless a division schedule states otherwise.
- Higher seed is the home team and may choose to be the visiting team.
- Early-round championship games use the regular division time limit. The final uses the championship-game time limit listed in Section 7.
- Ties are not permitted in championship play.
- California tiebreaker: the last completed at-bat from the previous inning starts on second base with no outs. A full inning is played. The procedure repeats until a winner is determined.
- Championship awards and the number of places recognized are determined by NXT and may vary by division.

11. Lineups, Substitutions, and Re-Entry

- Teams may bat 9 players, 10 players with an extra hitter (EH), or the entire roster.
- Free defensive substitutions are allowed.
- A starter may re-enter once and must return to the starter's original batting position.
- A team must have 9 eligible players to start a game.
- A team may finish with fewer than 9 players. An out is recorded whenever a vacant batting position is due.
- When batting the entire roster, an injury creates an out only the first time the injured player's position is reached, unless the team has no eligible players available to continue.
- When batting the entire roster, an ejected player's position is an out each time it is reached.
- A player who leaves for reasons other than injury, illness, or emergency remains subject to the applicable vacant-position out.

12. Courtesy Runners

- A courtesy runner is allowed for the pitcher and catcher at any time.
- When batting the entire roster, the courtesy runner is the last batted out.
- When batting 9 or 10, a legal substitute must be used.
- A courtesy runner is mandatory for the catcher with two outs to support pace of play.
- The same courtesy runner may not run for both the pitcher and catcher in the same inning unless the team is batting the entire roster and has no other eligible option.

13. Pitching Restrictions

Pitching limits are designed for league administration and do not replace a coach's responsibility to protect player health. Teams must also follow any more restrictive pitching or rest standard required by their parent organization.

- 6U-12U: maximum of 6 innings per player during a league week, Monday through Sunday.
- 13U-14U: maximum of 7 innings per player during a league week, Monday through Sunday.
- The championship is treated as a separate event: 6U-12U maximum 6 innings; 13U-14U maximum 7 innings.
- One pitch thrown counts as one inning pitched.
- A pitcher removed from the mound may not return to the mound in the same game.
- A dual-rostered player may pitch for only one team during the same league week and only one team during the championship event.
- Managers must accurately report pitchers and innings after each game. Failure to report does not erase innings thrown.
- Use of an over-limit pitcher may result in forfeiture and additional discipline.

14. Balks and Pitching Rules

- 7U-8U: balks are not called.
- 9U: one balk warning per pitcher, then balks are enforced.
- 10U and older: balks are enforced.
- A pitcher may not fake a throw to third base while engaged with the pitching rubber.
- An intentional walk requires only notification to the umpire; no pitches are thrown.

- Umpires may stop play to correct an unsafe or clearly illegal pitching action in younger divisions.

15. Bats and Metal Spikes

- 13U and below: USSSA 1.15 BPF, USA Baseball, BBCOR, or wood bats are permitted.
- 13U on a 54/80 field: minimum bat differential is drop -8.
- 14U and older: BBCOR (-3) or single-piece wood only.
- Illegal-bat penalty: the batter is out unless the offensive team chooses the result of the play; the head coach is ejected.
- Metal spikes are permitted for 12U and older only.
- Metal spikes are never permitted on portable pitching mounds or where prohibited by the facility.

16. 6U-8U Supplemental Playing Rules

6U pitching method and any machine-pitch or coach-pitch procedures are controlled by the division schedule or supplemental rules. Where those materials are silent, the following rules apply to 6U-8U.

- No leadoffs. A runner may leave the base only after the pitched ball crosses home plate.
- Stealing home is not permitted.
- Dropped third strike is not in effect.
- Infield fly rule is not in effect.
- A 7-run cap applies each half-inning until the final declared inning, which is open.
- The ball is dead when the pitcher has control of the ball on or immediately adjacent to the mound and runners are no longer actively advancing.
- Umpire judgment controls runner placement when the ball becomes dead.

17. Mound Visits

- One charged mound visit is allowed per inning for each pitcher.
- A second charged visit to the same pitcher in the same inning requires the pitcher's removal from the mound.
- A visit caused solely by an injury is not charged when the umpire determines that no strategy discussion occurred.

18. Safety and Equipment

- Catchers must wear a helmet with throat protection, chest protector, leg guards, and an athletic cup.
- Skull caps are not permitted.
- Batters, runners, and youth base coaches must wear properly fitted helmets. For 12U-14U, batting helmets must cover both ears.
- Electronic communication is limited to the catcher and must be an in-ear device. No other player may use electronic communication during live play.
- Jewelry or equipment that creates a safety risk may be removed at the umpire's direction.
- Any player showing signs of concussion, heat illness, or a significant injury must be removed until cleared in accordance with applicable law and league policy.
- Only authorized coaches, players, umpires, and NXT staff may be in dugouts or on the field.

19. Pace of Play

- Between innings: 90 seconds or 5 warm-up pitches, whichever occurs first.
- A returning pitcher may receive fewer warm-up pitches at the umpire's discretion when the team delays the game.
- No pregame infield is permitted unless specifically authorized.
- Players and coaches must hustle on and off the field.
- Lineups should be provided before the plate meeting, and teams must have a catcher ready when the prior half-inning ends.
- The umpire may direct a batter to enter the box or a pitcher to deliver the ball when a team is unnecessarily delaying play.

20. Home/Away, Dugouts, and Scorekeeping

- The published schedule controls home and away. If the schedule does not identify home and away, a coin flip will decide.
- In championship play, the higher seed is home and may choose to be away.
- The first-listed team uses the first-base dugout unless the facility or NXT staff directs otherwise.
- Both teams must keep a scorebook. The home team is the primary scorekeeper unless NXT provides an official scorekeeper.
- Managers must verify the final score and all pitchers/innings immediately after the game.
- The score and pitching record entered by NXT are official. Any correction request should be made before both teams leave the field whenever possible.

21. Forfeits, Rescheduling, and Makeups

- Game time is forfeit time unless the NXT League Director grants a brief grace period because of unusual circumstances.
- A team that cannot field 9 eligible players is subject to forfeiture.
- A forfeit is recorded as 7-0 and counts as a scheduled game for the forfeiting team.
- A team needing a schedule change must contact NXT as early as possible. Approval is not guaranteed, and the opposing team may not independently change a game without NXT approval.
- Team-caused cancellations that cannot be rescheduled may be recorded as forfeits.
- Weather or facility cancellations will be rescheduled when reasonably possible. NXT may use alternate dates, shortened games, doubleheaders, different locations, or adjusted championship seeding.
- A team's inability to attend an authorized makeup date does not require NXT to create another date.

22. Sportsmanship, Conduct, and Facility Rules

The head coach is responsible for the conduct of the team's players, assistant coaches, and spectators. Participation is a privilege, and behavior that disrupts the game or creates an unsafe environment will not be tolerated.

- No abusive language, threats, fighting, taunting, harassment, or prolonged arguing of judgment calls.
- Only the head coach may calmly request a rules explanation from an umpire.
- Players must avoid malicious contact. A runner must slide or avoid when a play is being made, but a runner is never required to slide into danger.
- Spectators must remain in designated areas and may not enter the field or dugout.
- No alcohol is permitted. Tobacco and vaping are prohibited in youth playing and spectator areas.
- No dogs or other pets are permitted, except trained service animals, where facility policy allows.
- Outside food is prohibited where posted. Player hydration, necessary player snacks, and one team cooler are allowed unless the facility directs otherwise.
- EZ-ups, chairs, and equipment may not block walkways, gates, emergency access, or another spectator's reasonable viewing area.
- Facility-specific rules and instructions from NXT staff must be followed.

23. Ejections and Suspensions

- An ejected player, coach, or spectator must leave the field area promptly and may not remain in a location where the individual can continue communicating with the team or umpires.
- An ejection carries a minimum suspension from the team's next scheduled game. The NXT League Director may increase, reduce, or otherwise modify the suspension based on the circumstances.
- Refusal to leave, continued misconduct, or failure to control spectators may result in forfeiture.
- Fighting, threats, discriminatory conduct, or physical contact with an umpire or staff member may result in removal from the league and referral to the facility or appropriate authorities.
- Suspensions apply across all NXT divisions and events unless the NXT League Director states otherwise.

24. Protests

Protests are limited to rule interpretation, player eligibility, or the use of an ineligible pitcher or player. Judgment calls are not protestable.

- The protesting head coach must notify the plate umpire and opposing head coach before the next pitch or play when reasonably possible.
- The protest fee is \$100 cash. The fee is refunded if the protest is upheld.
- An eligibility protest must identify the specific player and basis for the challenge. General roster fishing is not permitted.
- The NXT League Director or designated administrator will make the ruling. The game may be paused, completed under protest, or resumed later at NXT’s direction.
- All protest rulings are final.

25. Weather, Format Changes, and Refunds

- NXT may adjust fields, locations, game lengths, start times, playoff structure, or other formats because of weather, darkness, field conditions, safety, or operational needs.
- NXT determines whether a stopped game is complete, suspended, resumed, or replayed.
- Weather delays and cancellations do not automatically create a refund. League refunds or credits are governed by the registration terms and the number of games or services already provided.
- No refund is due for games forfeited by a team, games missed because of team availability, or discipline-related removal.
- When practical, NXT will prioritize providing playable games or reasonable credits rather than cash refunds.

26. Items Not Covered

Any situation not specifically addressed will be decided by the NXT League Director or designated league committee. The decision will be based on player safety, fairness, the intent of the rules, and efficient league operation. All such rulings are final.

NXT Sports USA may revise this rule book during the season when necessary. Written updates distributed to managers or posted with the league schedule become effective as stated in the notice.

Manager Game-Day Checklist

Before the first game	Confirm the official roster, jersey numbers, age documents, and any grade-exception documents.
Before each game	Review the schedule, field assignment, home/away status, lineup, pitching eligibility, and player equipment.
At the plate meeting	Exchange lineups, identify batting format, confirm time limit, and ask any rule questions before first pitch.
During the game	Track innings pitched, maintain control of the dugout and spectators, and address only rule questions with the umpire.
After the game	Verify the final score and pitching record with the opposing manager and report any issue immediately.

By participating in the NXT Summer League, each team agrees to follow this rule book and all written league notices.

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