



Grand Slam (9U) Rules

Grand Slam Baseball is an instructional, non-competitive program for children under the age of 10 years. The purpose of Grand Slam is for players to learn to love playing baseball by developing baseball skills and an understanding of the game, encouraging participation and healthy competition, and making the game fun! Grand Slam is a transitional league that focuses both on developing basic baseball skills and playing actual games, without keeping score. While it may vary year-to-year, we attempt for 60% of playing time to be games and 40% to be practices.

As there are no fixed rules for Grand Slam, Altona Minor Ball created its own set of rules which substantially adhere to the guidelines put forth by Baseball Canada. Any variance between these rules and the guidelines put forth by Baseball Canada will be the result of past experiences and feedback received from coaches and parents over the years.

1. Player's Equipment

- A. Catchers need to wear full equipment. A mask, chest protector, and shin guards are provided.
- B. Bats may be wood, composite, or metal.
- C. Batting helmets must have double ear flaps.
- D. Batting helmets must be worn by batters, baserunners, and on-deck hitters.
- E. Players most often wear runners as footwear in this league (good ankle support is recommended), however, soft plastic or rubber cleats are permitted.

2. Field Dimensions and Set Up

- A. The home team should set up the field prior to the scheduled game time.
- B. A softer version of a baseball (eg: Rawlings ROTC or Rawlings ROTB1) will be used for all Grand Slam games and practices.
- C. Grand Slam fields have base paths of 60 feet.
- D. The pitching machine should be set 40-42 feet away from the back of home plate.
- E. The pitching machine should be set and tested by the home team prior to commencing the game.
- F. Once the game has started, only micro-adjustments to the pitching machine are permitted unless both head coaches agree that the pitching machine needs to be changed.

3. Game and Inning Length

- A. Games will be one hour long but may be extended to allow an inning or half-inning to finish or to allow both teams to bat an even amount, if both head coaches agree.
- B. Games may be shortened if both head coaches agree that starting a new inning will continue the game well past the one hour limit, or the players are tired, cold, and/or are no longer having fun.
- C. It is desirable but not necessary that each team have the same number of at bats.
- D. An offensive inning is complete after all team members have batted once regardless of defensive outs.

4. Coach Positioning

- A. Coaches pitch to their own team.
- B. The team that is batting should have a coach behind the catcher to help correctly position the batters, collect pass balls, position the tee (if necessary), and remove bats from the base paths.
- C. The team that is fielding should have a coach or two behind the infield to help direct defensive players.

5. Defensive Positioning

- A. Throughout the season, all players should play all fielding positions multiple times, and all players should play catcher at least once.
- B. Defensive changes are unlimited – Coaches are encouraged to have their players play a different position each inning.
- C. A team of six players will fill the regular infield defensive positions: Pitcher, Catcher, 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and Shortstop.
- D. A team of seven players will add a second defensive pitcher or an outfielder, at the coach's discretion.
- E. A team of eight players must have at least one outfielder.

6. Batting Order

- A. Throughout the season, all players should bat from every spot in the order multiple times.
- B. Batting order changes are unlimited – Coaches are encouraged to have their players bat from a different spot in the order each inning.
- C. Teams should avoid consistently using the same last batter.

7. Pitching and Hitting

- A. Each batter will receive 5 balls from the pitching machine.
- B. If a batter has not hit a fair ball after 5 balls, the coach behind the catcher will place the batting tee and the hitter will have as many balls as is necessary to get one into play. Do not sit the tee on top of home plate. The tee should be positioned so that the ball is at the front of home plate so that the batters are hitting the ball out in front of the plate.
- C. There are no bases on balls (walks) or strikeouts.
- D. Any hit made off a tee will only be a single regardless of where it lands, except for the last batter when the last batter rules will apply.
- E. A batted ball is declared dead if it hits a coach on the mound or the pitching machine. The batter is credited with a single and the baserunners advance one base.
- F. Teams are allowed (but do not have to use) one bunt per game but must notify the other team that they will be bunting prior to the at bat. Teams should avoid consistently using the same bunter.

8. Base-running

- A. No stealing is permitted.
- B. No leading off is permitted.
- C. Baserunners cannot leave their base until the ball has been hit. A baserunner who leaves their base prior to a ball being hit will be called out.
- D. There is no sliding.
- E. Baserunners do not advance on an overthrow.
- F. Once the play is declared dead, the baserunner must stay on or return to the last base they touched.
- G. There is no tagging-up and advancing on caught fly balls, except for the last batter when the last batter rules will apply.

H. To ensure players are taught correct baseball sense, coaches are encouraged to not be overly aggressive with their players on the basepaths – ie: don't send a player simply because you know they can beat the throw if doing so wouldn't be a "real" baseball play in older ages.

9. Last Batter Rules

- A. All balls hit by the last batter will be "live" balls and play will continue until the defense gets the ball to the catcher and the catcher makes contact with home plate in possession of the ball.
- B. Once the catcher makes contact with home plate in possession of the ball, the inning will end regardless of how many players remain on the bath paths.
- C. The catcher does not have to tag any baserunner during a last batter live ball.
- D. If any player other than the catcher is in possession of the ball, the normal rules for getting outs will apply (tag the runner or force-out), and the remaining baserunners will still be live and eligible to score.
- E. If the defensive team catches the last batter's ball in the air, the last batter is out but any players on the bases can tag up and attempt to score until the catcher touches home plate while in possession of the ball.

10. Fielding

- A. The infield fly rule does not apply.
- B. Baserunners are gotten out by either tag or force in the usual way.
- C. The play is over once all baserunners are out, all baserunners have scored, or the ball has been returned to the coach running the pitching machine.
- D. To ensure players are taught correct baseball sense, the coach running the pitching machine can declare a play over if the play has reached its natural conclusion, and all baserunners must stay on or return to the last base they touched – ie: we would like to avoid multiple defensive throws from base to base in an attempt to get extra outs and the general chaos which results from scramble plays.

11. Calling the Game

- A. Except for anything adjusted and explained above, the normal rules of baseball will apply.
- B. 95% of the time, the call is obvious but now and then a call may not be; at these times, we ask that you do the best job you can and try to work as a team with the other coaches on the field.
- C. The coach operating the pitching machine will have the final say on any out/safe calls in the game.