

MSHYB 2026 Gulf Coast League Rules

1. The strike zone is expanded to include 2 inches on each side of home plate. The strike zone runs from the mid-point of the batter's shins to the top of the batter's shoulders.
2. A player may pitch a maximum of 6 innings in a calendar week (Monday through Sunday) during the regular season and a maximum of 6 innings in a day and 8 innings in a calendar week (Monday through Sunday) during the playoffs. The delivery of a single pitch to a batter constitutes having pitched in an inning.
3. The manager must remove the pitcher when said pitcher reaches the pitch limit for his/her age group as noted below, but the pitcher may remain in the game at another position:

<u>League Age:</u>	<u>Prior to April 19th</u>	<u>Starting April 19th</u>
11	65 pitches per day	85 pitches per day
9-10	55 pitches per day	75 pitches per day
8	40 pitches per day	50 pitches per day

EXCEPTION: If a pitcher reaches the pitch limit imposed above for his/her league age while facing a batter, the pitcher may continue to pitch to that batter until any one of the following conditions occurs:

- That batter reaches base;
- That batter is put out; or
- The third out is made to complete the half-inning.

The team's manager should indicate that a pitcher has exceeded the pitch limit in this situation by checking the "Allowed Excess Pitches" box in the electronic game recap form.

NOTE 1: A pitcher who delivers 41 or more pitches in a day cannot play the position of catcher for the remainder of that day.

NOTE 2: A catcher who catches 4 or more innings in a day cannot pitch for the remainder of that day. The delivery of a single pitch to a batter while a player is catching constitutes that player having caught an inning.

NOTE 3: The pitch count of a pitcher who is eligible under Rule #4 to pitch on back-to-back days is limited on the second day to the pitcher's maximum daily pitch count above minus the number of pitches actually thrown on the first day.

4. The following table indicates the number of calendar days of rest that must be observed based on the number of pitches pitched in a day:

<u>Pitches</u>	<u>Required Calendar Days of Rest</u>
66 or more	4 days of rest
56-65	3 days of rest
41-55	2 days of rest
26-40	1 day of rest
1-25	0 day of rest

EXCEPTION: If a pitcher exceeds a pitch count threshold while facing a batter that results in an additional day of rest being required under this rule and continues to pitch to that batter only until any one of the following conditions occurs:

- That batter reaches base;
- That batter is put out; or
- The third out is made to complete the half-inning;

and the pitcher does not then deliver a pitch to another batter, then the pitcher's rest requirement will be determined as if such pitch count threshold had not been exceeded during that at bat. For this exception to apply, the pitch that causes the pitcher to exceed the threshold may not be the first pitch of that at bat.

The team's manager should indicate that a pitcher has exceeded a pitch count rest threshold in this situation by checking the "Allowed Excess Pitches" box in the electronic game recap form.

NOTE 4: After pitching on back-to-back days as permitted under this rule, a pitcher's rest requirement will be based on that pitcher's pitch count on the second day.

NOTE 5: No pitcher may pitch on three or more consecutive days regardless of that pitcher's pitch count on the first two days.

5. The pitch count recorder must provide the pitch count for the current inning for any pitcher when requested by either manager or any umpire. However, each manager is responsible for tracking the per-inning and cumulative pitch counts of all pitchers used by both teams and knowing when his/her pitcher must be removed. (See General Rule #53 for a further description of the pitch count recorder and tracking pitch counts.)
6. A violation of the innings or pitch count limits by a player shall result in (a) the ineligibility of that player to pitch in the next game for which he would otherwise be eligible to pitch and (b) the manager being subject to suspension. Additionally, MSHYB reserves the right for its safety committee in its sole discretion to restrict the number of innings pitched by the affected player in subsequent games.
7. A player removed as a pitcher may pitch in a subsequent inning only if the following conditions are met:
 - (a) The player was the pitcher at the time that the previous inning in which he pitched ended (either due to the third out being recorded or the maximum runs per inning being reached as described in Rule #19).
 - (b) The pitcher has not reached his daily pitch count limit or weekly or per game innings limits.

For clarity, a player voluntarily removed as a pitcher before the end of an inning may not return to pitch in that game.

8. Any make-up games or continuations of suspended games shall be played under the ***pitching rules*** prevailing at the time the game was originally scheduled.

NOTE 6: In the case of a suspended game, the pitcher who was pitching at the time of the game suspension shall be allowed to continue pitching in the continuation of the suspended game for however many pitches or innings remained in his eligibility from the original suspended game, provided he meets the rest requirements under Rule #4 and has not exceeded his daily pitch count limit or innings limit for the particular week during which the continuation game is played.

9. The batter will not be permitted to reach first base on a dropped third strike; the batter is out.
10. Per General Rule #44, intentional walks are permitted, and the pitcher must throw 4 balls to intentionally walk the batter. The pitches will count in pitch count totals, and a baserunner on second base may steal during the intentional walk (subject to the league-specific stealing rules).
11. There is no penalty if a pitcher balks; the umpire will issue a warning to the pitcher. However, per General Rule #45, if the pitcher starts his wind-up, sees the batter square to bunt, and then stops his wind-up, the umpire shall call time out immediately and the pitcher will be charged with a ball.
12. The infield fly rule does not apply.
13. All outfielders shall be positioned in fair territory at least 20 feet beyond the back edge of the infield (10 feet on B and C fields which have larger infields) until the pitched ball has reached the batter.
14. Base stealing is permitted from second to third base only. A runner attempting to steal third base may not continue to advance to home plate even if an attempt is made to put the runner out by a throw from the catcher during the steal attempt. A runner who is on first base at the start of the play may not advance to second base. No other runner may advance or be played upon during the steal attempt. The steal attempt is deemed over when the runner stops his advance due to defensive pressure or the ball is returned to the pitcher.

NOTE 7: Delayed steals of third base are not allowed. Following a pitch, once the ball is secured by the catcher and then has left the catcher's hand in the process of throwing it back to the pitcher, a runner on second base may not attempt to steal third base, regardless of where the attempted throw to the pitcher ends up. A throw by the catcher that is an attempt to put out a runner on second base is not considered a throw of the ball back to the pitcher.

NOTE 8: No attempts shall be made to pick a runner off any base except second base. Since a runner cannot advance in the event that a pick-off throw is wild, it would not be fair to allow a catcher or pitcher to throw to one of those bases with nothing to lose. However, if a runner on second base leaves the base, he is always at risk of being put out by any player until the ball is called dead.

15. The first time in a game that a base runner attempts an illegal advance on a steal attempt (defined in Rule #14), the player shall be returned to the base last legally occupied without liability to be put out and the team shall receive a warning. If a subsequent runner of that team attempts an illegal advance on a steal attempt, he shall immediately be declared out.
16. A team is prohibited from attempting to steal bases at any time it is leading by 10 or more runs. If the team's lead subsequently drops below 10 runs, it is once again permitted to attempt steals as long as the lead remains below 10 runs. If a base runner attempts to steal a base in violation of this Rule #15, the player shall be returned to the base last legally occupied without liability to be put out.

17. Defensive substitutions/playing time:

- A. Substitutions may be made freely only at the end of any half-inning.

EXCEPTION: a pitcher may be replaced at any time.

- If the pitcher is replaced by a player from the bench, the pitcher must go to the bench.
- If the pitcher is replaced by a player from the field, the pitcher may move to any position in the field. The position vacated by the new pitcher may be filled by any player on the field.

- B. All players must play at least 2 complete innings of the first 4, and 1 complete inning of the last 2 in the field. If a player arrives any time during the first or second innings of the game, one inning will be deducted from the player's minimum defensive playing time requirements. If a player arrives any time during the third inning of the game, two innings will be deducted from the player's minimum defensive playing time requirements. If a player arrives any time during the fourth inning of the game or later, the manager shall use his/her discretion in determining the player's minimum defensive playing time requirements.

- C. The bottom of the last inning will count as an inning in the field whether played or not.

- D. Defensive positions are to be rotated during each game.

- All players must play a minimum of 1 complete inning in the infield.
- Playing the catcher position will fulfill the player's infield requirement.

PENALTY: These minimum total and infield innings rules will be enforced by the Officer of the Day, if actual or potential violations are brought to his attention during a game and enforcement is possible. If enforcement during a game is not possible, the player who has violated the rule must start the next game and play any defensive requirement not completed during the previous game and the defensive requirement for the current game before being removed. A second violation by that team will subject the team manager to suspension.

NOTE 9: Defensive line-ups must be exchanged by the coaches before the game.

During the game, the opposing team must be told about any defensive changes.

18. Batting order:

- A. All players present at a game shall be in the batting order throughout the game. The batting order shall not be changed during the game except for necessary accommodation for injuries, family requirements, etc.
- B. Players arriving late, having missed their scheduled at bat, will bat following the last batter in the batting order (including any players called up for the game) when that position next comes up.
- C. Players called up for a game will bat in the last position for that game (subject to the late-arrival provision in Rule #18B, in which case the player arriving late and missing their scheduled at bat will bat following the call-up).

19. For the first 5 innings of the game, a half-inning will conclude (a) after 3 outs have been made or (b) after 6 runs have been scored in the half-inning. In the 6th inning, a half-inning will conclude (a) after 3 outs have been made or (b) after 10 runs have scored in the half-inning. In games that extend to extra innings, a half-inning will conclude only after 3 outs have been made, i.e., there will be no limit on the number of runs that can score in extra innings.

NOTE 10: If the Officer of the Day or umpires have determined for whatever reason that the game will not continue to the 6th inning, the limit of 6 runs per half-inning is still applicable, i.e., the 10-run limit is not to be interpreted as being applicable to the “last” inning of the game per se – only to the 6th inning.

EXCEPTIONS: During the first 6 innings, in the event of a home run hit over the fence, the batter and all runners on base shall score, regardless of how many runs have already been scored in the half-inning. During the first 6 innings, in the event of a ground rule double, any runners who started the at-bat on second or third base shall score, regardless of how many runs have already been scored in the half-inning.

20. Rule #19 is not a “Mercy Rule” and games should continue regardless of the score.

21. For a game played on a weekend, no inning may start after one hour and forty-five minutes from the actual starting time. For a game played on a weekday, when only one game is scheduled on the assigned field, no inning may start after two hours from the actual starting time.

EXCEPTION: If a game is tied at the end of the inning that is in progress when the time limit is reached, the Officer of the Day shall determine if play shall continue at that time or if the game shall be suspended. (See General Rule #27.)

NOTE 11: There will not be time limits in the playoffs.