

1. VCSS Playing Rules

NOTE: ISA/SSUSA rules will be used with the following rule changes.

- 1.1. The game ball must be rated “synthetic” max 375 lbs. .44 cor.
- 1.2. Pitchers Equipment – Every pitcher must wear a face mask and shin guards when the pitching screen (net) is not in effect for the game. When the pitching screen is being used, face mask and shin guards are optional.
- 1.3. A pitcher’s pitching screen (body net) will be used for the safety of the pitcher. Immediately after the pitcher throws the pitch, they must retreat behind the pitching screen until the ball is hit. Once the ball is hit, the pitcher may field the ball. If the pitcher fields the ball before going behind the pitching screen, the ball is considered dead and all runners on base will advance one base and the hitter is granted first base. Any thrown ball that hits the pitching screen is considered a live ball. The pitcher may adjust the net before the start of their half inning pitcher. Once the half inning starts, they cannot reposition the net.
- 1.4. Pitching Arc of 6 feet to 12 feet shall be used. A pitching mat will be used with the entire mat being the strike zone.
- 1.5. Illegal Pitch - The Umpire is to call an illegal pitch as soon as he detects such by saying “Illegal” to the batter.
- 1.6. Commitment Line - Once runners have **touched the ground on or past** the commitment line, they cannot return to third base but must continue to home plate.
- 1.7. A player can only be used as a courtesy runner once per inning. If a player had a courtesy runner run for them, they cannot be a courtesy runner for someone else in the same inning they were run for. When a runner is used for a batter at home plate, that runner (rabbit) can only advance to first base. Exception: If the throw to first base is overthrown, the courtesy runner, can advance at his own risk to second base and further. In order to use a runner from home plate, the batter must have a temporarily legitimate injury and cannot run from home. The opposing managers and umpire must talk before the game to ensure the runner is approved. No other batter can have a runner from home plate; all players must run to first base.
- 1.8. A modified format of strikes and balls with one courtesy foul will be used. Each batter will start with one ball and one strike. After two strikes, one foul will be allowed with the next additional foul causing an out. (1-1 count allows 2 foul balls before the 3rd the batter is out)
- 1.9. Foul tip must be over the batter’s head and caught for it to be called an out.
- 1.10. Before the game the Umpire should meet with the Managers and discuss: Picked up players, injured players and special ground rules. A team may not use the same pick-up players 2 games in a row in the same calendar week during the regular season. Teams with roster of 10 players (11 when rover is in play) may not pickup players. If a team is missing players (under 10 or 11), and there are not enough players available to be picked up, the opposing team will supply a catcher to throw the ball back, until a qualified player is available (the missing player is counted as an out in the batting order until the qualified pickup player is inserted). A team must have 6 (11 on roster) or 5 (10 on roster) of its rostered players to start a game or the game will be forfeited. If a player leaves or is injured during the game and cannot continue, the team that went under the number of rostered players does not forfeit but can continue to play with the opposing team supplying a catcher or a replacement player is inserted.
- 1.11. During Playoffs and Tournament games.

- 1.11.1. The usual pick-up rules apply except that a picked-up player may play with a team as many games as needed but can only be “reserved” for the immediate game, not anything in the future. (e.g., asking a player to play for a team all of its potential playoff games) All pick up players are picked up in accordance the players rating needed.
- 1.12. All pick up players may bat in any spot in the batting order and be on existing league rosters or sub list. All pickup players can play any position.
- 1.13. If an injury occurs and the player is removed from the game, the position and batting order will not be an out. **A replacement from the bench must be utilized first before finding someone.**
- 1.14. Only when an injury causes the team to fall below the minimum roster number of available players, an equivalent rated replacement player may be recruited and added directly into the line up and batting order. If a team starts the game below the full roster number, even if they could field a team, they may not pick up a player if someone gets hurt. Additionally, that spot in the lineup will be an out.
- 1.15. The Manager picking up players has to tell the opposing Manager whom (by rating) he has picked up for whom (by rating). At that time, the opposing Manager has the right to challenge the skill levels of players being replaced or if they already used them that calendar week but must do so before the game starts. **Once the game begins, no challenge can be made.**
 - 1.15.1. The pick-up player starting the game must continue play for that game. A second game manager may later identify a “temporary” game replacement player arrangement where a specific player will join the second game when available. **Replacement players playing in first games will continue playing until that game is over and the second game will either await their team player’s availability before starting the game or utilize the “temporary” replacement to start.** The “temporary” replacement can be inserted anywhere in the line up and then exchanged for the returning team player.
- 1.16. Any player ejected from a game will be suspended for one additional (mandatory) game. Suspensions may be increased at the discretion of The Board. Any player who is ejected twice in one season will be removed from the league. Use of a “shaved bat” is prohibited. Detection will result in removal from the league.
- 1.17. All players are limited to 2 over the fence home runs per game. All other over the fence home runs will be scored as a walk, players on base will advance based on a walk. Only if the bases are loaded will it force a runner to score. A home run hit with a 5th run on base will be counted toward the 2-home run limit.
- 1.18. During the season, new players will be added to a team, by the President or his delegate only. Replacements will be placed in the order of when the opening occurred (e.g. first open spot, then second).
- 1.19. Protests - All protests must be made and settled before the next pitch. Protests can only be made by the Manager. All disputes which result in protest must be settled at that point in the game by the highest-ranking available officer and chief umpire. The game must be stopped at the point of protest and protest resolved. Any protest filed after the game has continued is invalid. If the highest-ranking officer and chief umpire are involved in the dispute, they must recuse themselves from the decision and the matter would be handled by the next ranking officer and/or another umpire or manager.

- 1.20. When a team begins a game without all its rostered players and a rostered player shows up, he must play in place of a pick-up player at the conclusion of that half inning.
- 1.21. All teams have the same number of 2 on their roster. The team must play the game with 2. If they cannot find a substitute that player will be an out when it's time to bat comes up. Or bat a 2 twice if the other team has more 2s on their roster. If both teams are missing a 2 this rule does not apply.
- 1.22. All players in attendance, unless injured, must be in the batting order and must play at least 3 innings in the field. The team manager is not required to play three innings in the field, but must bat, unless injured.
- 1.23. Runners must use the outside home plate or scoring line. Any runner crossing into the batter's box or sliding into home plate regardless of the plate action, will be called out.
- 1.24. Batter's box
 - 1.24.1. The umpire will alert the batter regarding any discrepancy on feet placement in the batters box prior to a pitch so that it can be corrected.
 - 1.24.2. Running toward the pitcher is prohibited and the batter will be called out.
 - 1.24.3. If the line is "obliterated", the umpire has the right to "draw" a line to show the batter where he can set up. However, the umpire will not apply a judgment of where the line would be without benefit of either a chalk line or a "drawn" line being present. Deliberate obliteration of the line(s) by any batter is prohibited and will result in the batter being called out.
- 1.25. At the end of the season, all teams tied with the same won/loss record (winning percentage) will use following criteria to break the ties:
 - 1.25.1. Head-to-head play
 - 1.25.2. Total runs differential between the teams in their games.
 - 1.25.3. Won Lost record in their division.
 - 1.25.4. Least runs allowed in their division.
- 1.26. Post season games. The team with the best won/lost record will be the home team. If the teams have the same seasonal record, see Rule 1.25 for tie breaker.
- 1.27. Inclement weather may force a game to be called early by the Umpire. If 4 or more innings have been played, the team ahead will be declared the winner (or 3½ or more innings if the home team is ahead). Any game called before the play of 4 innings shall be declared "suspended" and shall be resumed at the exact point of play when the game was stopped.
- 1.28. TIE BREAKER RULE: When games are tied after 7 innings and the game can go into extra innings because of allotted time, each half inning shall start with the last batter from the previous inning on 2nd base until such time as the game is completed. A courtesy runner is allowed, if agreed by both managers. **If the original batter (last out of inning) runs it is not considered a courtesy runner and that player can run again as a courtesy.**
- 1.29. A runner must not interfere with the fielder at any base making a play where they are catching or throwing. If the player does interfere, they will be out and the runner behind them will be out as well. Sliding into the base does not constitute interference. If the player gets out of the way to prevent interference and the fielder drops the ball on a force out and it **hits the ground** (not in a transfer or throwing motion) the player is safe. The fielder **cannot** tag the runner out after retrieving the ball. If the runner deliberately touches or hinders the defensive player at the base, he and the runner behind him are out. **This is a judgment call of the Umpire.**
- 1.30. A game clock will be used. Time allowance will follow the ISA rules.

- 1.31. For rained out games, they will try to be made up during the regular season by playing a doubleheader. Each game of the doubleheader will be 5 innings, with one pitch per batter. Or if there are any open unused days in the regular season, then a regular game would be played instead of the doubleheader.
- 1.32. Managers must be forthcoming to alerting the President that a player is no longer playing for the remaining season, so that a replacement might be added. If a manager does not admit to a missing player and another manager or officer determines the player is finished, that manager is penalized by placement of a lowest level replacement and last pick in the next draft and a forfeit of all impacted games.
- 1.33. When an 11 player is used in the field (rover), the rover can play in the outfield or be a fifth infielder.
- 1.34. The four outfielders must stand behind the white line in the outfield until the ball is put into play.