

Game Rules

- 1) **NO head first sliding – runner will be called out for head first sliding.**
- 2) Games will be 6 innings (or two hours, whichever comes first). The first 5 innings will be machine pitch, the last inning will be kid pitch.
- 3) Each team should have a coach or adult that is familiar with the operation of the pitching machine operating the machine during the game. It is suggested that this is not a rotational position during the game, and should not be done by someone who does not have experience operating the machine.
- 4) A team gets three outs per inning.
- 5) Teams can bat their entire lineup if they do not have three outs. Once all players in the lineup have batted in an inning, the inning is over. Please do not have the last batter in an inning “circle the bases” (unless they have legitimately clobbered the ball into the next county).

We will be teaching the kids to make plays at all bases, and the practice of having the last batter circle the bases often result in a wild chase with kids running in all directions. To prevent collisions, please have the last batter and all base runners stop once they have reached the appropriate base and then proceed to the dugout in an orderly manner.

- 6) The batting order should be rotated every game. Do not use different batting orders within the same game (e.g., inning by inning).
- 7) There are no balls or called strikes when using the pitching machine. The batter gets 3 swinging strikes from the pitching machine.

When the kids are pitching 3 strikes is an out (called or swinging) and 5 balls is a walk. A hit batter gets first base.

If a pitcher hits 3 batters in 1 inning the pitcher must be removed from the game.

- 8) Extra base hits will be allowed. Base runners must stop at the base to which they were advancing as soon as the ball leaves the outfielder's hand. If the ball does not leave the infield, runners cannot advance beyond the next base from where they started. Please use good judgment.

We want to teach the kids the right way to run the bases – running hard for a double, going from 1st to 3rd on a ball in the gap – but only in legitimate situations. Once an outfielder throws the ball, no further advancement is allowed.

- 9) There will be no advancing on overthrows at any base.

- 10) Stealing or taking leads is not allowed.
- 11) Each player must play in the field. Any one child may play a position a maximum of twice in the same game. No Exceptions! Use common sense when placing players in certain positions. It is important that all players get a chance to play all positions during the season. Common sense is important here - coaches should not put players in a position where they cannot protect themselves...first basemen that have no chance at catching a ball, a pitcher that has trouble paying attention, etc.

No player should sit out two innings in a row, and coaches should try to make sure players sit out an equal number of innings.

- 12) Each team will play 9 players in the field. The outfielders must play in the outfield grass – they are not extra infielders.

Coaches should not be coaching from the field. Coaches must be on the sideline.

- 13) On defense, it is important that we teach the kids to make plays appropriately. Teach them about force outs and how to make the right play. Enforce that a player throw the ball to a teammate covering a base – discourage them from fielding the ball and chasing down runners themselves (unless, of course, if this is the right baseball play given the situation). This teaches them the proper way to play the game and will avoid collisions.
- 14) Outfielders cannot make plays on a base. If an outfielder fields a ball and runs the ball to a base for a force play, or covers a base and receives a throw from an infielder for a force play, **it will NOT be considered an out**. It is important that we teach the infielders to cover the bases. Note – if an outfielder is legitimately playing in the outfield grass, fields a ball and throws to an infielder covering a base for a force out, an out will be recorded.
- 15) We will not be keeping score. Encourage the kids to have fun and learn the game.
- 16) Sportsmanship and positive attitudes towards and between players is important. Encourage them to praise each other, and to respect the opposing players and teams. **NO NEGATIVE TALK SHOULD BE CONDONED OR ALLOWED – FROM KIDS OR PARENTS.**
- 17) After each game, a handshake between all players and coaches is a must. No exceptions.
- 18) There will be no smoking in the dugout or on the field of play by anyone.
- 19) When addressing a child, take your sunglasses off. Your eyes during discussion are very important. Also, if physically possible, kneel down on one knee and come down to their level. Sometimes we have a tendency to look intimidating to a child that is only 3 feet tall. This goes a long way in the teaching process.

- 20) Don't yell at any players for mistakes they make during the game. Use mistakes as a "teaching opportunity", and calmly demonstrate to them proper technique or explain to them how the play should have been made. Keep it positive. Kids know when they make a mistake – it's important we don't further embarrass them.
- 21) If a child is placing himself in a dangerous position due to lack of attention and concentration on a given day, switch his position with another child on the field or move him out of danger. Do this in a creative and sensible way.

Let's make this a fun and enjoyable season for all of us. As coaches, it is important that we set a good example, and encourage the parents of our players to do the same. To the extent that there is a question about a rule or a call on the field, handle it like a gentleman and show the proper example to our boys. We are here to have fun with our kids and teach them the game of baseball – let's never lose sight of that.