

T-Ball Regulations

It is the purpose of this program to teach some of the basic rules of baseball, good sportsmanship, and to have fun playing baseball. The emphasis is not on winning the game, but on learning to act as ladies and gentlemen during the course of playing the game. The spectators and coaches must keep this priority in mind. The players, coaches, and spectators are not to "boo" or heckle the opposing players, coaches, or other spectators. Any disputes are to be handled by the coaches in a quiet manner away from the players. Remember that this is a game and it is played for fun!

1. GAME PROCEDURES

- (a) A minimum of 8 players is needed to begin a game. If fewer than 8 players are ready to play 15 minutes after the scheduled start time the game will be considered a forfeit, but coaches are encouraged to play a practice game with borrowed players. The forfeit game score will stand as official. Report forfeits to the coordinator immediately. The coordinator will make any necessary changes to keep teams playing. Consistent forfeits are to be avoided.
- (b) Players are required to wear their uniform (jersey and cap) to all games. Long pants should also be worn.
- (c) Each team will play all players in the field using half of the players in the infield with the remaining players in the outfield. The players must be rotated between infield and outfield for successive innings (i.e. first inning in the infield, then the second inning in the outfield, third inning in the infield, etc.).
- (d) Players should be assigned to a different position for each inning. (To give all players an opportunity to play different positions, they may be rotated within the infield (or within the outfield) midway through an inning.) Players should be given an opportunity to play each position during the season.
- (e) An outfielder (including those players designated as back-up for first, second, or third base) must not enter the infield to play the ball. (Playing out-of-position does not teach the team concept and does nothing for the player playing the infield position.)
- (f) Every member of the team will be in the batting order. In order to give each player similar base running opportunities, the batting order should be reversed in alternating innings.
- (g) No score is kept. Each game will end as a tie.
- (h) Each game will consist of five innings, if possible within the 1 ¼ hour time limit.
- (i) NO pitch shall be thrown after 1 hour from the scheduled game start time and the score shall revert back to the previous completed inning.
NOTE: An inning starts at the end of the previous inning, not when the players are in position and ready to resume play.
- (j) An inning will consist of all players on the batting team receiving a time at bat. Runners will not remain on base when an out has been made as a result of the play. The "retired" runner will return to the team bench. The number of outs made has no significance for determining the length of the inning.

2. COACHING and UMPIRING

- (a) The head coach of the batting team will serve as the umpire at home plate. The home plate umpire will be responsible for the batter and for plays at home plate and removing the tee if there is a chance of a play at home plate.
- (b) The head coach of the batting team will designate two assistant coaches who will coach the runners at first and third base, and will serve as umpires at these bases while their team is batting.
- (c) The coaches of the team in the field will stand behind the infielders and coach the players on position, plays on runners, and will serve as umpire for calls in the field and at second base. Coaches are to stay out of the infield to facilitate its use by the players. There is no limit on the number of coaches allowed in the outfield.
- (d) The coach/umpire making a call has the last say on the call. Perfection is not required and changes can be easily made. A decision should be changed if it is incorrect. Do your best on judgment calls and call the coordinator if there is a rule problem.
- (e) Players, coaches, and spectators shall not be allowed to harass the opposing players or the umpire at any time. Penalty shall be ejection from playing field by the umpire after one warning. The Head Coach is assigned responsibility over the game conduct of EVERYONE associated with that coach's team; coaches, players, fans and parents. Umpires will address concerns about good sportsmanship with the head coach.
- (f) Any player or coach, who, in the judgment of the umpire, intentionally throws a bat or helmet in a malicious manner, shall be subject to immediate ejection from the game by the umpire.
- (g) Every precaution should be taken to prevent protests. All coaches should bring the facts of the protest to the opposing coach prior to their actual occurrence if at all possible. Report protests to the coordinator immediately. No protests are allowed on judgment calls.

3. **BATTING**

- (a) The ball used will be the R.I.F. (Reduced Injury Factor) ball provided by the league.
- (b) Batters, base runners, the player in the pitcher's position, and the catcher must wear a helmet at all times.
- (c) The on-deck position is NOT used. Players must remain on the bench. Only coaches and players are allowed in the bench area. All unauthorized personnel should be asked to leave the playing field by the head coaches.
- (d) Prior to placing the ball on the tee, the home plate umpire will check with the coach on the field to determine if the fielding team is ready. The pitcher will then be signaled to go through a simulated windup and throw for each pitch. The pitcher must be positioned with one foot on the pitching rubber until the ball is hit.
- (e) The batter must watch the wind-up and throwing motion, and not swing at the ball on the tee until the motion is completed. If the batter hits the ball beforehand, it is considered a "no pitch" and all runners go back to their original bases and the hitter hits again.
- (f) Prior to the time the pitcher makes the simulated wind-up, the home plate umpire should adjust the tee to the height of the batter, and place the batter's feet on a line directly pointing the pitching rubber. The batter's feet must not be adjusted in order to hit the ball in a direction where the defense is weakest. Such a shift will result in a "no pitch" and all runners will go back to their original bases.
- (g) After a full swing, the ball must travel beyond the line at the 15-foot distance from home plate, or it will be called a foul ball. The home plate umpire will judge the distance and make a call of fair or foul as soon as possible and as loudly as possible. If an infielder fields the ball within the 15-foot radius and makes a play, the home plate umpire should have already made the call as to fair or foul. Thus, the infielders do not have to wait until the ball clears the line if in the home plate umpire's judgment the ball will clear the line. All runners should run on such a play without waiting for the umpire's call.
- (h) There is no bunting. Every batter is to take a full swing at the ball.
- (i) The bat must hit the ball. The bat may hit part of the rubber tube and part ball, but it must travel beyond the 15-foot line. The home plate umpire is the sole judge on this matter. (When the bat hits only the rubber tube, or the ball does not travel the required distance, it is a strike.)
- (j) There are no strikeouts. Each player stays at bat until hitting a fair ball.
- (k) Throwing the bat is an automatic out after one warning to the offending team from the home plate umpire. When a warning is given, a "no pitch" is called and all runners return to their bases. (This is a critical rule and must be stressed to the players early and often.)
- (l) Any batted ball striking a runner in the field of play before being touched by a fielder results in that runner being called out. The batter is awarded first base and the other runners return to their previous bases (except when required to advance by the batter gaining first base).

4. **FIELDING and BASE RUNNING**

- (a) "T-Ball" is not a running game and marginal decisions should put base runners back, not forward.
- (b) Before the signal is given to the home plate umpire that play is to begin, the second base coach must check that the players are in the proper positions and know their assignments.
- (c) Any ball thrown from the outfield or infield out of the playing field shall advance runners one base from the base they are going to. The field of play is marked by an imaginary line from the backstop to the outfield parallel to the first base line, and parallel to the third base line.
- (d) A thrown ball hitting a player in the bench area, a spectator, or coach, shall advance runners one base beyond the base they are going to.
- (e) A ball thrown to a base, not fielded but remaining in the field of play will remain in play and runners advance at their own risk.
- (f) If a ball is intentionally thrown out of the field of play the home plate umpire will determine the bases to be advanced.
- (g) Base running stops when a ball is returned from the outfield and enters the infield. If the runners are more than half way to a base, they may continue to that base at their own risk after the ball enters the infield. If the runners are less than half way to a base when the ball enters the infield, they must return to their prior base. Base coaches for the batting team make this call. Disputes over this rule should be settled quietly among the coaches, with attention given to Regulation 4. (a).
- (h) If the throw from the outfield is to catch a runner, the ball remains in play and all runners may continue to run at their own risk. If the throw is to end a play, Regulation 4.(g) applies. The home plate umpire makes the determination if the throw was to catch a runner, or end the play.
- (i) The batter/runner is allowed to turn toward second after passing first, but if an attempt is made to advance to second the runner is liable to be tagged out.

5. *INCLEMENT WEATHER*

- (a) In the event of inclement weather, it will be the decision of the coordinator to postpone the game. If the coordinator is not available, the head coach of both teams will make the decision. In an effort to play as many games according to the published schedule, the decision to postpone a game will be made not more than one hour before the scheduled start time. No game will start or continue during an electrical storm. At the first sign of any lightning all play will stop immediately. The home team coach will immediately inform the Scheduler of the postponement. When the tornado-warning siren is sounded, all play will stop immediately, the game is postponed, and all players, spectators and coaches should immediately seek shelter. Coaches should be certain that no players are left at the field without a means to get to a safe place.
- (b) Postponed games can only be made up after receiving a make up time from the Scheduler. (For games that have been scheduled to be played at a Gatewood field the Division Coordinator serves the role of Scheduler.) It is the responsibility of the head coach of each team (or substitute) to call the Scheduler to receive the scheduled make up time. A game that has been postponed due to inclement weather (or for darkness) and is not a complete game will be completely restarted by taking the next available make-up time not on the same day as the original game. A make-up time that causes a team to play two games on one day will only be used in special circumstances and will require approval by the President, Vice-President and Division Coordinator.

6. *MISCELLANEOUS*

- (a) The home team is responsible for getting the bases from the equipment shed before the game. (Make sure the equipment shed is locked during the game.)
- (b) After the game, the players and coaches are responsible for leaving their respective bench areas clean.

The home team is responsible for putting away the equipment after the game, and to make sure