

South Elgin Minor Ball

T-Ball Rules with Provisions for 4-Pitch Play

The objective of T-Ball is to promote an interest in the game of baseball, and teach kids some of the basic rules.

1) Eligibility - Up to 7 years of age.

2) Ball - 9" soft touch or 11" soft touch for 4 pitch play. Distance between bases 40 ft. Distance to pitcher's mound 28 ft. Distance to fair ball arc 13 ft. A safety base should be used at first, and the players taught to use it properly.

3) Defensive players - 10 players on the field at one time, unless mutually agreed by the coaches ahead of time. Positions are: pitcher, 1st base, 2nd base, 3rd base, shortstop, right side shortstop, and 4 outfielders. If coaches have agreed to use additional players, they shall play as outfielders.

4) Offensive players - All players in a team's lineup will bat in each inning, in correct order. If one team has more players than the other, they will all bat regardless. The team with the fewer players can continue through their order until they have batted the same number of players, if they wish to, then start the next inning wherever they left off.

5) A game shall consist of three innings, with no new inning to start after one hour and 15 minutes, unless agreed by the coaches prior to the game. The bottom of the inning will always be played, to ensure each team gets the same number of at bats. Games rained out or cancelled can be rescheduled at the discretion of the coaches, if desired.

6) Defaulted Games - There should be no defaulted games due to lack of players! If not enough players show for one team, the other team should loan players to the team that is short, in order that a game will be played. Remember why we're here!

7) Fair Hit Ball - All Players must wear a helmet when batting or baserunning! A ball hit off the batting tee must make it past the 13 foot arc to be considered a fair ball. A ball which stops before reaching this line will be considered foul, and the player returns to bat again. **ALL PLAYERS MUST HIT A FAIR BALL IN THEIR TURN AT BAT.** No player will be counted out on strikes. All other normal rules for foul balls apply. Players should be taught not to throw their bat, but instead to consciously drop it at the tee before running.

8) 28 Foot Rule - No defensive player may stand closer than the 28 foot arc (drawn on the infield) before a batter has hit the ball. Once the ball is hit, any defensive player may enter the zone to get it.

9) Baserunning - When a batter has hit the ball, the infielders are entitled to try and make a play to put the runner out. However, runners will not advance on overthrown or missed balls. On a ball to the outfield, runners can advance until a fielder gains possession of the ball. (Possession of the ball for T-ball means touching the ball!) At that time, runners may continue to the base they are going to, but no farther. They are still liable to be put out while running. No lead-offs or base stealing. If a fly ball is caught by a defensive player, runners may advance one base only, at their own risk. Normal rules apply. There will be no infield fly rule in this division. We recommend kids be taught to overrun first base, and stay put on second and third.

10) Last batter - The last batter of an inning should be announced, however, the regular rules apply. When a fielder gets possession of the ball, or the last batter is put out, any remaining base runners simply walk off the field, and the inning is over.

11) Coaches - There should be no more than three defensive coaches on the field at one time: each team will have to work out what works best for them. There should be two offensive coaches just off the field, one at first and one at third, as well as a coach to instruct the batters, and set the ball on the tee. USE VERBAL INSTRUCTIONS ONLY; do not push the players in the direction they are supposed to go. On plays at the bases, the defensive coach closest to the play should make the safe or out call. REMEMBER WHY WE'RE HERE! The coaches of both teams should encourage ALL the players, and help them when necessary. In addition, there should be a person on each bench to organize the batters, and keep them in the game.

Provisions for 4-Pitch play

12) For older players or those that are more experienced, the offensive coach may pitch to the players if they wish. All players batting from the tee should bat first with the players being pitched to, batting after. The player will get 4 pitches from their coach which they will try to hit. If no hit is made with 4 pitches, then the tee will be brought in and the player will bat from the tee.

13) Please be sure that the opposing team is aware that a player will be batting from a pitch, and not the tee. Assuming these players may hit the ball further, the opposing team needs to pay close attention to the play.

14) Score may be kept while the game is on, but remember, it is not the end result that is important! If kids have fun at this level, they will continue to play for years to come. If they don't, they may never come back! Encourage sportsmanship and fair play, and dwell on the positive; and most of all, HAVE FUN!

Rules updated 2017