



2019 Soft-Toss/Tee Ball Rules

Games:

1. The score is not recorded. No season records will be kept, no wins and losses.
 - a. While players and a few parents will want to keep score, the manager/coach should NOT determine or acknowledge who won or lost. Rather, encourage the players on what they did well and what they need to work on for the next game or practice.
2. No game will last more than 4 innings. Most games will be much shorter due to the time limit which is as follows:
 - a. No new innings shall start after 1 hour (recording the start time of the game when the first batter comes to the plate)
**most games last 3 innings—3 at bats per team
3. The defensive manager/coach in the field is the umpire. Batters/runners who are called out on a defensive play can still remain on base.

Offense:

1. An inning lasts until every player on both teams bat. Each team will bat their full roster once per half inning.
2. Every player at the game should bat multiple times during the game regardless of outs recorded**3 times is the typical average
3. Each batter will get 3-5 soft-toss pitches; if the batter cannot put the ball in play the batter will then hit off the batting tee. Considering that for game pace it could be quicker to toss a few more pitches if the hitter is close to getting a hit than to stop and bring out the Tee, a coach could decide to toss more than 5 pitches. All of the coaches on both sides should encourage hitters to hit the soft toss if possible for quicker baseball player development
4. Runners may advance more than one base ONLY if no one has touched the ball. Once a defensive player has touched the ball, the runner can only advance to the base they're headed to. There is no advancing on overthrows. No stealing bases.
5. There are no strikeouts.
6. The manager/coach from the offensive team throws the soft toss and/or feeds the Tee for their own team's players. Each team MUST have a coach or parent

volunteer on the bench. Coaches and parent volunteers should also act as the base coaches.

7. Only the current batter should have a bat in their hands (NO ON DECK BATTERS). On the bench, the on deck and in-the-whole batters should be wearing a helmet for speed and safety though the line-up initiated by the bench coach. The team should sit on the bench in their exact batting order during their turn on offense.
8. There will be NO catcher or defensive plays at Home Plate. Players should be taught to make outs by force or tag at 1st, 2nd or 3rd base
9. Batters should be taught to run through, not to, first base.
10. Offensive runners should be encouraged to slide into any base where a defensive play may occur. Kids will love to slide and this can avoid collisions with other children.

Defense:

1. All players may be in the field. However, on the infield, there should be no more than 6 players including the pitcher playing traditional baseball positions (P, 1B, 2B, 3B, SS, ROVER). All the other players may be in the outfield which would be still on the dirt or in the grass area just past the base line. The pitcher should be no closer than 46' from home plate.
2. **There is no catcher**
3. All players on a team must play infield AND outfield during the game at least one inning. Coaches should use a depth or field chart to keep track of player positions.
4. **All players must play infield and outfield multiple times during the season.**
5. Players should be instructed in making the correct defensive play. The manager/coach of the defensive team may be in the field to instruct the defensive team. For example:
 - On a ground ball hit to the 2nd baseman, encourage the player to throw the ball to 1st base as opposed to running over and tagging the base
 - With a runner on 1st base, on a ground ball to SS or 2nd baseman, the SS/2nd baseman should try to make the out at 2nd base and then throw to 1st base.

6. Since there is no catcher, there will be no attempts to make outs at Home Plate to avoid dangerous collisions and chaos around Home Plate.

Note: Should a defensive player record an out in a non-traditional method (3rd baseman fields a ground ball, runs to first and tags the bag) it can be recorded as an out. However, the defensive coach should immediately instruct the player on what should have occurred.

7. WYB will attempt to keep smaller 7-10 player rosters when possible to allow more individual coaching, more playing time as infielder and better paced games

Best Practices Coaches Systems:

1. Set your batting order at the start of the season (1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10). The next game rotate the line-up by 1 (2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10,1). Continue this throughout the season and all players should get the same amount of at-bats and chance to hit earlier in the line-up.
2. When your team comes to the dugout, they should sit on the bench in their batting order. Players should not be wandering about, playing with equipment, throwing baseballs or holding bats in the dugout. If a player needs to visit a parent for a drink or bathroom break, that's fine, but they should immediately return to the bench.
3. Establish a practice of players keeping their hat and mitt together when they are putting on helmets to take their turn at bat. This will save tons of time when it's time to go back in the field.
4. When issuing hats, grab a black sharpie and write the player's name and number on the inside. Again, it will save a lot of time (and a few tears) in the long run.
5. Plan your defensive line-up before coming to the field for your game. Use a field depth chart form listing all of the positions. Come to the game with your chart and line up filled out ahead of time. This makes sure all players are rotated appropriately on defense and offense and speeds up the game and enjoyment.
6. Plan to enlist ALL parents who attend practices as volunteers. Maximize your repetitions in your drills by having a parent run stations or match up one to one with kids. When putting players and parents together, try not to match players with their own parent to avoid parental pressure.
7. Competition and results are not to be emphasized.

Best Practices Coaching Practice:

1. Teach hustle and attitude. Everywhere we go we run; everywhere we run we smile. Keep it fun!
2. Responsibility at Tee Ball level is to focus on teaching solid fundamentals of throwing, catching, hitting, base running and how the game works.
3. Use stations for drills to maximize repetitions. Divide the players into groups of 3 or 4 with different skill building drills per station. Rotate through all stations during practice 8-10 minutes each.
4. Use games of Tag and pair kids for stretching and warm ups. Build relationships among players and volunteers for team building.
5. Use ELM principal at all times
 - Effort—best effort always
 - Learning—consistently trying to add new skills to learn
 - Mistakes—foster an environment where making mistakes is OK. Learn from mistakes
6. Teach Respect for ROOTS: Rules, Opponents, Officials, Teammates, Self

7. Fill their tanks with positive praise 5:1 ratio—praise 5 times for every 1 critical comment
8. Start practices without gloves when teaching catching skills. Two hands, fingers up, thumbs together, athletic stance—use Beanbags for catching confidence
9. Throwing fundamental—teach lead-elbow point/L-throwing arm/cobra hand position—punch the giant/punch the dwarf for full throwing motion and follow through
10. Fielding fundamental—Gorilla-Step-Step-Tap Technique to get into the proper fielding position.
11. Hitting fundamental—align feet, hips, shoulders, head and elbows in a neutral stance EVERY swing. Mark where feet should go in the stance EVERY swing

Exit Skills to accomplish to move to Coach Pitch

There is not a determining factor on age whether a player should be ready to move to Coach Pitch. However, for the most part many 1st and 2nd graders could be moved to the coach pitch level especially if they've already played one year of Tee Ball. Six-year-olds can be assessed by skill assuming they've played one year of Tee Ball as well.

Players moving to Coach Pitch should be able to do these skills:

1. Understands how to run the bases both station to station and taking an extra base on a hit to the outfield.
2. Knows at least three ways to make an out on defense by force, tag, or catching a pop up.
3. The player should be able to get in the proper catching, throwing and fielding position on command from his coach and is starting to get in that position in actual play.
4. The player should be starting to make contact with a pitched ball when batting by making a fundamentally solid swing at the ball every time even if it's fouled or missed.
5. The player should be starting to catch thrown balls and small pop-ups. At the very least, the player should be consistently catching a thrown ball on the glove-hand side when thrown from a coach.
6. The player should be starting to get an "eye" for the game by starting to recognize and anticipate game type situations. This skill will vary widely and shouldn't be over scrutinized because players mature a lot over each winter as they get older.