



Coach Pitch Fall Ball Rules



As we are getting ready to start our Fall Ball Season, we wanted to send out the rules and expectations for Fall Ball. Fall Ball is an instructional program, the rules are a little different than during the regular spring season. We want every player to have the opportunity to try new things and develop skills along the way. The Fall Ball rules that we have established in years past helps to facilitate these goals. Here are some house-keeping items for the upcoming season beginning:

Purpose

- It's all about the kids! -Have fun, play fair and ensure the kids learn and get better. Fall Ball is instructional, designed to develop skills, build confidence, and encourage kids to try new positions.
 - There are no wins or losses recorded, this season is all about developing the kids to prepare them for the division they will be playing in, in the spring. Scores will be recorded during each game for learning purposes but not turned in for wins or losses.
 - Standings will not be kept. Sportsmanship, effort, and learning are emphasized.
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Age Group

- Division: Coach Pitch (Ages 6-8)
 - Players use the league age they will be for the upcoming spring season (age on April 30th of the following year).
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Game Format

1. Game Length: 6 innings or 60 minutes, whichever comes first. No new inning will start after 50 minutes of game time. Hard stop at 60 minutes.
2. Run Rule per Inning: Maximum 5 runs per half-inning (no cap in the final inning).
3. Mercy Rule: Game ends if one team leads by 15 after 3 innings or 10 after 4 innings, unless both teams agree they want to keep the game going.

Procedures & Policies

- Both teams can keep the 'book' (score and outs) if they would like to.
- Calling Outs:
 - 1 Defensive coach will be allowed to be in the outfield to instruct the defense and will help make base calls. The 1st and 3rd base coaches will umpire their respective bases.
- Regular baseballs should be used unless talked about in advance by the coaches.

General Rules

- Ten players on the field at a time. Seven-player minimum to begin to play. No rovers allowed. The extra player must play an additional spot in the outfield.
- Rotation Encouraged: Coaches should rotate kids through both infield and outfield positions.
- A player cannot play the same position for over two consecutive innings.
- All players will bat; if a player cannot continue to play, there will be no penalty to the offensive team when he is due up. If he is able, he can re-enter without penalty.
- Batting order from game to game will be continuous, meaning if the 7th batter made the last out of the previous game, then the 8th batter will lead off the next game.
- All players are limited to sitting out no more than one inning per game, unless they are late for the game or injured. All players must play at least one inning in the infield per game.
- The infield fly rule does not apply.

Pitching and Batting

- a. Coaches will pitch to their team. Pitches must be overhand, and the coach will pitch from the first rubber at approximately 40 ft. The coach should pitch from a knee or stand, whatever they prefer.
- b. If the ball hits the pitching coach or interferes with play, the play is 'dead' and counted as one of the seven pitches.
- c. The batter will receive seven pitches to get a hit—no Strikeouts after three swinging strikes. If the player has not hit after seven and the pitches are hittable, the player is out. Use common sense to determine if the pitch is "hittable."
- d. If a batter fouls off the 7th pitch, it will be counted as a foul ball, and he will get another pitch.
- e. All players on the official game roster must bat in the lineup.
- f. Players will receive one warning for a thrown bat; a second thrown bat will result in an out by the player.
- g. Helmets must be worn from when a player leaves the dugout until the player returns to the dugout. Players taking their helmets off in the field will

receive a warning. Consecutive occurrences by the same player will/can result in an out.

Base Running

- Feet first sliding is allowed when a player is being played on. Head-first sliding is prohibited unless diving back toward the player's original base.
- Runners may advance as many bases at their own risk off a hit. If an overthrow leaves the playing field, a runner may advance *one* base at maximum.
- If an overthrow at 1st base is made, runners *may not* advance. We want to teach the kids to make good, hard throws to 1st base.
- Coaches should use good baseball judgment when advancing runners and especially when scoring runners. It is not difficult to advance runners and score runs at this level. ***The objective of coaches should be to teach the game of baseball.*** Excessive base running is not encouraged. Advancing two bases on balls hit deep into the outfield is acceptable—i.e., rounding first for second base or scoring from second base.
- NO STEALING! NO LEADING OFF UNTIL THE BALL CROSSES THE PLATE; RUNNERS LEAVING EARLY WILL BE CALLED OUT AFTER A WARNING ISSUED!
- No runner may advance when the ball gets to the infield and a player has control of the ball. Coach pitchers should reasonably try to collect the ball if it is thrown to them. He may proceed if an offensive base runner is over halfway to a base when the player or coach pitcher collects the ball. If under halfway, the player must return to the previous base. Coaches must use fair judgment.

Defense

- The pitcher should remain even with the pitching coach and within 5 feet to the left or right of the rubber. *Players playing the 'pitching' position SHOULD wear a helmet. This is not a requirement but a suggestion.
- The infield needs to be in regular fielding positions. No shifting or "rover"
- The outfield (4 players) must be on the outfield grass (unless the game is being played on a regulation baseball field).
- Catchers must wear full catching gear (provided by each team)
- 1 coach will be allowed on the field for defense and should be positioned generally in the center field to help with calls at 2nd base.

Sportsmanship

- Players, coaches, and fans must respect umpires, opponents, and the game.
- Negative cheering, arguing with umpires, or unsportsmanlike behavior will not be tolerated.

Additional Rules

- Coaches and players are responsible for cleaning up their dugouts after the game.
- Please help rake between games if needed..
- Ball Type: Use regulation hardballs (9 in, 5 oz).
- Uniforms: Jerseys and hats required. Color of pants/socks are optional, you can't make these mandatory.
- The batter and base runner must wear helmets at all times. Rubber cleats or tennis shoes only. No metal cleats
- Bat Rule Updates: All bats must be certified by the new USA Baseball Bat Standard and have the USA Baseball stamp on them. 2 $\frac{5}{8}$ " bats are allowed with no restriction of length to weight ratio (drop). 2 $\frac{1}{4}$ " bats will still be allowed if they too are stamped with the USA Baseball stamp. NO EXCEPTIONS FALL BALL: USSSA BATS ARE ALLOWED
- Fall Ball coordinators can call games due to weather, darkness, or any other safety reason deemed necessary by the umpire.