

Youth Baseball Division Structure and Rules — Supplement to Cal Ripken/Babe Ruth League Rules

Important Note: This document defines division structure and specific rules for T-Ball through AAA. All divisions default to Cal Ripken/Babe Ruth League rules except where specifically modified herein. Where this document is silent on a rule, the current Cal Ripken/Babe Ruth rulebook governs. Division names, age cutoff dates, and items marked TBDBL (To Be Determined By League) are to be finalized by the board prior to each season.

**** Players in the T-Ball, A Ball, and AA Ball divisions are always assigned to divisions and teams by Player Agents based on a player's League Age, baseball experience and ability. In a Spring season, teams in the AAA, Majors, Senior divisions are determined by a draft of eligible players by managers. During a Fall season, players in those divisions are assigned to teams by Player Agents based on player age, baseball experience and ability.**

Note: The division descriptions below are for a Spring season. The Fall season is more instructional and less competitive than a Spring season. During a Fall season, there are no standings, playoffs, or All-Star teams, and no trophies are distributed for players in any division. Fall Leagues will be offered in September - October.

Ages for Fall Leagues is one year older than normal, meaning kids are invited to play up a level for Fall Ball if they meet the league age requirement for the following Spring. If they do not meet the age requirement the following Spring they would need to pass a player evaluation which would be held at the end of the prior Spring Season. If a player not of league age plays up in the Fall and wishes to play up again in the Spring they must pass a player evaluation. Playing up in the Fall does not guarantee playing up in the Spring. If they do not get drafted they will play in (AA Ball) again.

T-BALL

T-Ball -- (Ages 4-5 with 6 yr old option) This is a basic introduction to baseball. This is an instructional division where players hit off a tee rather than hit a pitched ball using a soft t-ball ball, no scores are kept, every offensive player bats each inning regardless of outs, and no player sits on defense. Players are taught the fundamentals of baseball such that they are exposed to playing positions and are taught throwing, catching, batting, defensive ready position and running the bases. The games are 3 innings, subject to a 1 hour time limit. You can expect a (1) hour/(2) Day per week commitment at this level.

During the Spring Season, all players receive participation trophies.

LEAGUE RULES T-BALL

1. Players of League Age 4 - 5.
2. Players of League Age 6 may also request T-Ball, subject to approval by a Player Agent.
3. The player at first base and the player at the pitcher position must wear a batting helmet with a protective face cage at all times. The coach has the authority and responsibility to restrict which players may play first base based on their ability to safely catch a thrown ball. No player should be placed at first base if doing so creates a safety risk to that player.

4. All rules not specifically addressed in this section are at the coach's discretion, consistent with the spirit of fun and safety at this age level.

A BALL

A Ball -- (Ages 5-6 with 7-8 yr old option) This Division provides a transition from T-ball to coach/machine pitch. The games will be played using a safety ball. Players are taught the fundamentals of baseball such that they are exposed to playing positions and are taught throwing, catching, batting, defensive ready position and running the bases. Games are 6 innings, subject to a 1.5 hour time limit. For first ½ season, Innings a coach (soft toss)/machine pitcher will be utilized, If the batter does not put one of those in play, the batter will be given an opportunity to hit from the tee. For the (1st (½) of the season) players are not obligated to receive pitched balls – players or parents may request that they skip the live pitch opportunity and proceed directly to hitting off the tee. (2nd (½) season) full coach/machine pitch. 6 batters or 3 outs end an inning. Score is not kept. You can expect a (2 -3) day per week commitment at this level.

During the Spring Season, all players receive participation trophies.

*Coach pitch is soft toss or from a knee

LEAGUE RULES A Ball

Philosophy and Goals

The goal of this League is for the players (and their parents) to enjoy baseball while developing the knowledge and skills necessary to play the game.

The tone of the game is instructional. However, the games are not a clinic. The players should learn and improve upon the basic baseball skills of hitting, fielding, throwing, and base running. The development of good sportsmanship is extremely important.

1. Age limit for Coach/Machine Pitch Baseball is 5 & 6 yr. old. There is a 7 and 8 year old option for first time players/parent request
2. Players of League Age 5 with one season of T-Ball
3. Players of League Age 6.
4. Players of League Age 7 & 8 with no prior playing experience or by parent request. Pending Player Evaluation
5. Game consists of 6 innings or 90 min. of play.
6. Teams are co-ed.

7. Each team shall consist of no less than (6) players or more than (11) players.
8. Every player present at a game will be placed in the batting order.
9. All players shall play on defense every inning. The extra players must be positioned in the outfield.
5. The player at first base must wear a batting helmet with a protective face cage. The coach has the authority and responsibility to restrict which players may play first base based on their ability to safely catch a thrown ball. No player should be placed at first base if doing so creates a safety risk to that player.
10. Pitching coaches will call balls and strikes for instructional purpose only and are not counted. (Only if coach pitch but are not counted)
11. Coaches soft toss/pitch or run pitching Machine for their own team.
12. First half of the season: Up until (TBDBL) game. A batter is allowed (6) pitches. (After which, the ball should be placed on a tee or a maximum of 3 swings are permitted.) The purpose is to get the ball into play. a batter will get up to 3 swings from the Tee regardless of what the pitch count was prior to soft toss. If the 3rd swing is hit and a foul ball, then they can get another swing until it is hit into play or a missed swing. If player does not reach base the batter sits down. However, it will not count as an out.
13. Second half of the Season: After (TBDBL) game. A batter is allowed (4) machine pitches. (After which, a maximum of 2 soft tosses are permitted from the coach regardless of what the pitch count was prior to soft toss. If the 2nd toss is hit and a foul ball, then they can get another toss until it is hit into play or a missed swing..) If player does not reach base batter sits down. However, it will not count as an out.
14. All rules not specifically addressed in this section default to Cal Ripken/Babe Ruth League rules as adopted by the league.

AA BALL

AA Ball -- (Ages 7-8 with 9 yr old option) The AA Ball division is an instructional division where players hit safety balls pitched by coaches for ½ of the game and by players for ½ of the game. At this level, players improve their fundamental skills, sportsmanship, and teamwork. Players are taught the fundamentals of baseball such that they are exposed to playing positions and are taught throwing, catching, batting, defensive ready position and running the bases. Sportsmanship is still stressed along with the strategies required for competitive play. Games are 6 innings with no new inning allowed to start after 1.5 hours and a total time limit of 2 hours from the scheduled game time. Outs are recorded with three ending each half inning or 6 batters. Coaches call balls and strikes but there are no strikeouts or walks, but pitch limits. Scores are not kept. You can expect a 2 -3 day per week commitment at this level.

Philosophy and Goals

The goal of this League is for the players (and their parents) to enjoy baseball while developing the knowledge and skills necessary to play the game.

The tone of the game is instructional. However, the games are not a clinic. The players should learn and improve upon the basic baseball skills of hitting, pitching, fielding, throwing, and base running. The development of good sportsmanship is extremely important.

During the Spring Season, all players receive participation trophies.

LEAGUE RULES AA Ball

1. Age limit for Coach/Machine Pitch Baseball is 7 & 8 yrs. old (6 and 9 year old option) as of (Date).
2. Players of League Age 7 who have played with one season of A Ball.
3. Players of League Age 8
4. Players of League Age 9 with no prior playing experience. Unless they pass evaluation to play AAA
5. Players of League Age 9 may play in AA again by parent request and signed waiver.

6. Spring Season Only: Any player who attends a Player Evaluation session and are eligible for, but not drafted into, AAA.
7. Each team shall consist of no less than (10) players or more than (12) players
8. Every player present at a game will be placed in the batting order.
9. All players shall play on defense every inning. The extra players must be positioned in the outfield.
10. All outfield players shall be positioned at least 15 feet beyond the outfield grass cut.
11. The player at first base must wear a batting helmet with a protective face cage unless the coach determines the player has demonstrated sufficient catching ability to play the position safely. The coach has the authority and responsibility to restrict which players may play first base based on this assessment. No player should be placed at first base if doing so creates a safety risk to that player.
12. Pitching coaches/coaches will call balls and strikes but are not counted.
13. Coaches/Machine will pitch to their own team.
14. First 3 games of the season: A batter is allowed (8) pitches. (After which a maximum of 3 soft tosses are permitted.) The purpose is to get the ball into play. Once soft toss is implemented, a batter will get up to 3 tosses from the coach regardless of what the pitch count was prior to soft toss. If the 3rd toss is hit and a foul ball, then they can get another toss until it is hit into play or a missed swing. If player does not reach base batter sits down. However, it will not count as an out.
15. After the 3rd game (in the 4th game) of the season player pitch is introduced. A batter is allowed (8) pitches. (After which, a maximum of 3 soft tosses are permitted.) If player does not reach base batter sits down. However, it will not count as an out.
16. A player will pitch the ball, from the mound, after the first three innings (4th inning and after).
17. During player pitch if after 5 pitches are delivered with no ball in play the machine/coach pitch will be used to complete the offensive players at bat with 5 additional pitches.
18. The manager/coach operating the machine pitch will call ball/strike during the player pitch portion of the game. (for instructional purposes only)
19. A batter who is hit by a kid pitch will be awarded 1st base.
20. Runners are not permitted to advance on wild pitches.
21. No pitcher will pitch more than 1 inning or 3 outs per game.
22. Once Kid Pitching starts A coach/machine from the offensive team will provide all pitching during the 1st, 2nd and 3rd innings, Kids will Pitch 4nd, 5th and 6th
23. There are **NO** strikeouts. Players who miss the allotted amount of pitches will sit down. However, it will not count as an out. This will hold true for the entire season.
24. No walks, No leading, No bunting.
25. No stealing during coach/machine pitch, stealing is allowed during kid pitch.
26. All Players must play a minimum of 2 innings infield play per game.
27. Best effort should be made to have players experience all positions they are capable of **SAFELY** playing.
28. A catcher must suit up for all games.
29. Players should try and alternate positions every inning and at minimum every two innings.
30. There is no minimum amount of players needed to play a game as long as both Coaches agree.
31. We require a rolling batting order all season long
32. No extra bases on infield hits or overthrows to first base.

33. One base limit on an overthrow. Players can advance one base on the first overthrow only.
34. Balls hit to outfield – Runners may take extra bases – coaches discretion when ball enters back into the infield -- runners should be stopped. Employ common baseball sense when deciding when to allow runners to take an extra base.
35. All rules not specifically addressed in this section default to Cal Ripken/Babe Ruth League rules as adopted by the league.
36. The last (2) games will be entirely kid pitch and will follow AAA Rules (in preparation for possible All-Star play or moving up to AAA)
 - Except There be no walks. After a 4th ball is pitched, we will implement soft toss. The purpose is to get the ball into play. Once soft toss is implemented, a batter will get 3 tosses from the coach regardless of what the pitch count was prior to soft toss. If the 3rd toss is hit and a foul ball, then they can get another toss until it is hit into play or a missed swing. If a player stands there for all 3 and does not swing, it is the same as a strikeout. In these final two games, strikeouts count and are recorded, as this is preparation for AAA where full Cal Ripken/Babe Ruth rules apply.

AA Ball Pitching

- 1) Pitchers will be limited to players that are league age of 7-8.
- 2) Pitching rules will take effect beginning the 3rd week of the season.
- 3) Player pitching will be limited to kid pitch innings only. Coach/machine pitch will be used for innings 1, 2, and 3. Kid pitching will be used for innings 4, 5, and 6. Machine pitch is preferred for consistency and to build batter confidence. If coach pitch is used in place of machine pitch, the coach must pitch from one knee to match the arm angle and plane of a kid pitcher. Lobbed overhand pitches from a standing adult are not permitted as they develop poor swing habits.
- 4) Pitching distance will vary between 40-46 feet, which ever allows him to reach the plate. As the season progresses , coaches will move pitchers back to reach 46 feet. If a pitcher is too dominating at a certain distance, the coach will adjust his distance for the next inning he pitches. All pitchers will pitch from 46 feet for the final two weeks of the season.
- 5) The coach will attempt to set up hitters that are ready to be pitched to by a player. If that hitter is not ready, the coach will pitch to that batter.
- 6) Pitcher may pitch 5 pitches to each batter of that inning. If the batter swings and misses at 3 pitches or the 5 pitches have been thrown without the ball being put into play then the coach/machine will step in and throw up to 5 pitches to that batter.
- 7) A pitcher can only pitch 1 inning/50 pitches in any game. One pitch constitutes an inning pitched.
- 8) If a pitcher hits 2 batters in one inning, they must be removed from pitching any further in that game.

AAA BASEBALL

AAA -- (Ages 9-10 with 8 & 11 yr old option) The AAA division is an instructional division where players hit regulation little league balls. The skills that the players have been accumulating finally come together as they now work as a team pitching, hitting and fielding the ball. Introduces players to the full little league game with players pitching for the entire game. Players are taught advanced fundamentals of baseball, such that they are exposed to pitching techniques, playing positions, defensive pre-pitch preparedness, live batting and aggressive base running including stealing and bunting. Fundamentals and sportsmanship are still stressed, along with the strategies required for competitive play. Umpires are used, scores are kept, and standings are recorded. You can expect a 2 -3 day per week commitment at this level.

During the Spring Season Only: Players are required to attend a Player Evaluation prior to the start of the season and teams are formed through a draft by team managers. A post-season tournament will determine a "Champion" for their division. Each team in the Championship Game will receive a trophy or medal.

LEAGUE RULES AAA Ball

1. Age limit for AAA Baseball is 9 & 10 (8 & 11 year old option) as of (Date).
2. Players of League Age 8 with 2 seasons of AA Ball and Pass Player Evaluation
3. Players of League Age 9-10.
4. Players of League Age 10-11 with no prior playing experience. Unless they Pass Player Evaluation
5. Players of League Age 11 may play in AAA by parent request and signed waiver.
6. **The defense shall field a maximum of ten (10) players, with the extra player positioned in the outfield. (4 outfielders across; no short-fielders allowed).**

7. All other AAA rules follow standard Cal Ripken/Babe Ruth League rules as adopted by the league. This division represents the transition to full competitive baseball and should be governed accordingly, with the league-specific modifications listed above applied on top of the Cal Ripken/Babe Ruth baseline.
8. Umpires are required for all AAA games. Scores, standings, and statistics are kept. A post-season tournament is held to determine a division champion.
9. Pitching rules, pitch counts, and rest requirements follow Cal Ripken/Babe Ruth guidelines for the 9-10 age group. Coaches are expected to know and enforce these limits. No pitcher shall pitch more than the Cal Ripken/Babe Ruth maximum for their age in any single game or day.
10. Every player present at a game must play a minimum of 2 innings in the field per game, with at least 1 inning in the infield. Coaches are responsible for tracking and enforcing playing time. Failure to provide minimum playing time must be reported to the league.