

West Allegheny Baseball League T-Ball Rules for 5 and 6 Year Olds 2008

1. Purpose

T-Ball is for teaching young children the fundamentals of baseball. This teaching is to be accomplished in a fun manner without the stress of criticism on any child. Keeping in mind that winning is not the ultimate goal here. Managers are responsible for communicating with the other team to protect all players (i.e., warning the other team of a good, hard-hitting player, so defense can move back).

2. Age

T-Ball is for 5 and 6 year old boys and girls. Cut-off date is August 1. Exceptions will be made for first time players and four year olds who are physically ready to play T-Ball.

3. Regulation Games

A regular game will be 3 to 4 innings or 90 minutes whichever comes first. The length of each inning will be batting the side. If a game is postponed because of bad weather, the manager will contact you. Efforts will be made to make-up any rainouts, but field times must first be reserved with the Oakdale and Findlay Associations. All games will be played regardless of the number of players on each team.

4. Outs

Teaching children how outs are important to the game of baseball can be difficult at first. The following guidelines should be used.

A. Games played in May:

- 1) A batter thrown out at first base will retain first base.
- 2) A runner tagged out in the base paths will still be given the next base.
- 3) A defensive player tags the base of an oncoming runner. Runner still gets the base.

B. Games including and after June 1st:

- 1) A batter thrown out at first base will be out and return to dugout.
- 2) A batter tagged out in the base path will be called out.
- 3) A defensive player tags the base of oncoming runner. Runner is out.
- 4) A runner, who runs outside the base paths to avoid being tagged, will be called out.

5. Bats

Bats can cause serious, lifelong injuries to young children. It is imperative that parents and coaches preteach the dangers of, and the proper use of, batting equipment.

A. For games played in May: A player who throws the bat after hitting the ball will be warned for the first occurrence and called out after the second occurrence.

B. For games including and after June 1 – any player throwing a bat will automatically be called out and base runners return to original base.

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6. Offensive and Defensive Play

All players will play every inning both offensively and defensively. The batting order established by the manager will remain the same throughout the game. There will be no catcher. The batting coach will assist the batter and serve as catcher. The infield is not to exceed 6 players with emphasis on the proper positioning of all players. Outfielders will play at least 10 feet beyond the infielders. Defensive changes can be made during the game but not within an inning, exception being a player injury. (A force out is permitted at home.) Efforts should be made to protect the less skilled players when in the field. Children should also be encouraged to learn different positions in the field.

7. Coaching

A manager or coach must stand near the batter to position the batter, offer instruction, and serve as catcher. One coach will be at 1st base and one at 3rd base. Scores will not be kept at each game. Defensive coaches should help the fielders and position themselves as such.

8. Umpiring

There will not be an umpire in T-ball. The managers of each team will be responsible for fair play. A tie will go to the runner.

9. Base Running

Runners must stay in contact with the base until the ball is hit. When the ball is hit:

- 1) The runner or runners may run until they are out,
- 2) Or until the outfielder makes an attempt to throw the ball,
- 3) Or an infielder throws the ball towards any base or the pitcher.

Play then stops and runners will return or advance to the base he/she is closest (depending upon position relative to halfway between bases). Runners must stay in the baselines. They may not run all over the field to avoid being tagged out.

A runner can round first base as long as there is no deliberate move toward second base. Children should be taught; however, to overrun first base towards the right or straight-ahead. If a runner hits a fielder while a fielder is fielding the ball, the runner is out and the batter will advance to first base. Runners can run in front of the fielder as long as they don't touch the fielder. If the fielder has the ball in the baseline, the runner cannot try to go around him/her to avoid the tag or they will be out. They may run outside the baseline in order to avoid interference, but not when a play is being made on them.

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10. Fielding

There is no infield fly rule. Play stops as soon as the runner or runners stop, or when an infielder makes an attempt to throw the ball to any base or the pitcher.

A fielder cannot get in front of a runner and block the runner from getting to a base when a play is not being made. If a fielder is turned away from the runner, it is the runner's responsibility to avoid the fielder. A fielder may not run all over the field to tag out a runner. He/she should defend their position. For example, a first baseman may not run across the infield to tag a runner along the baseline between second and third base. Some children may think they are capable of playing the whole field, but this could cause chaos and injury, so coaches need to stress not to do that.

11. Overthrows

On an overthrow, the runners can advance only one base. An overthrow going more than 6 feet out of bounds is an automatic one base. On an overthrow going less than 6 feet, a player can retrieve the ball and make a throw towards any base, or the pitcher, before the runners cross an imaginary halfway line. The runners must retreat back to the bag. If the ball hits a parent, child, etc., the runner is awarded one base.

12. Pitching

The manager or coach will pitch underhand or overhand to his/her team depending on the ability of each player. The pitcher does not have to stand on the pitchers mound. He/she may adjust himself to the quality of the batter. Each batter will be given 5 if, and only if, there is a fouled off pitch. If the child does not hit the ball in fair play after 5 pitches, they will use the tee. There are no strikeouts. The batting coach will double as catcher and be responsible for moving the tee if there is a play at home plate.

Players continue to bat until he/she hits a fair ball. A fair ball consists of a ball hit over a 15-foot arc in front of home plate. Batters must take a full swing at the ball. There is no bunting. A batter may not hit the tee. The ball is dead if the ball hits the tee.

13. Dimensions

Bases are 45 feet. Arc from home plate is 15 feet.

14. Miscellaneous

- A. T-Ball season will consist of 10 games.
- B. League will use the RIF 1 balls or equivalent.
- C. Rainouts must be made up. Call Commissioner to reserve a field.

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- D. Season can start in May and can end in July.
- E. Games will be played at Findlay and Oakdale fields.
- F. Schedule games will be played on Sat. Rotation of schedule will be used.
- G. Managers can change dates of games to fit his team needs. If changes are made please inform Scheduler, maybe someone else can use that time slot to make up a game.

15. Managers Responsibilities

- A. Home team will be responsible to line field and place bases on field. (Managers will get a key or combo # to equipment shed and concession stand.)
- B. Home team is responsible to man concession stand.
- C. Suggestion: when handling out the schedule also include a rotation schedule for the concession stand.
- D. Home team will be responsible clean up field; place bases back into shed and to clean concession stand.

16. League Fees

- A. No League fees.
- B. Each Association will be responsible for trophies.
- C. No end of year tournament.

17. Board Members

- A. Board member is chosen from own Association rules. Example: The Commissioner or at large member from **North Fayette Oakdale** will be a member and have authority to make rules.
- B. Each year a Scheduler needs to be picked from Findlay and Oakdale to setup schedule for the regular season. Lastly, a Commissioner needs to be picked to help organize league affairs.

These rules are as complete and accurate as possible. However; settle them within the spirit of these rules. If a dispute arises and a mutual agreement cannot be made, take the play over rather than argue. The whole intention of this league is to teach fundamental baseball, teamwork, and above all, good sportsmanship. The youngsters learn a great deal by watching our behavior. With these goals in mind, this will be an enjoyable and rewarding season.