



WHEATON YOUTH BASEBALL T-BALL SUPPLEMENTARY RULES

Revised & Approved: January 2024

The T-Ball League has been established for the purpose of introducing kindergartners to organized baseball without being concerned with having to hit a pitched ball.

T-Ball is considered to be an introduction to organized baseball. League standings will not be kept, and All-Star Day and Championship Day are not applicable at this level.

League play will be governed by PONY league rules unless otherwise stated in these supplementary rules. The intent of Wheaton Youth Baseball is to teach the rules of the game, develop skills, provide an opportunity for fun, and to teach teamwork and sportsmanship.

**MANAGERS AND UMPIRES HAVE NO AUTHORITY TO WAIVE ANY
RULES SET FORTH IN THESE SUPPLEMENTARY RULES OR ANY OTHER
REFERENCED DOCUMENTS OR RULES.**

I. GENERAL INFORMATION

Coaching Youth Sports (CYS) has been adopted for use by the Wheaton Park District Youth Baseball/Softball Board of Control (Board of Control). The Wheaton Park District will provide CYC class prior to the start of the spring season. New managers are encouraged to complete this class within one year of entering the program. CYC managers will be given first priority in team assignments throughout all levels of this program.

It is the responsibility of each manager or their replacement to see to the proper conduct of themselves, their coaches, players and team fans. Failure to carry out this responsibility may result in game forfeiture, and/or disciplinary action, including removal from the baseball program.

Every effort will be made to limit the number of players per team to a maximum of 12.

II. THE GAME

- A. The home team is responsible for setting up the field prior to the game and also making sure the equipment is put back into the equipment box following the game.

**Please remember to lock the equipment box prior to leaving the field.
Inform the league VP of any problems or missing equipment at the field.**

- Bases are located 50 feet apart
 - Pitching rubber is 36 feet from home plate (the back point of the plate)
 - Fair ball arc is located 15 feet in front of home plate between the foul lines
- B. The home team will bat last and use the third base side dugout (bench).
- C. Before game time, the home team and the visiting team shall exchange their respective batting orders. Each team's lineup card shall list the players first and last name, and a uniform number if available.
- D. There are no umpires assigned or scheduled at this level of the program. It is the responsibility of the managers and their assistants or selected parents to officiate the game.
- E. Games are scheduled to begin at 6:00 p.m. on weekdays. If a team is unable to field at least eight (8) players by 6:15 p.m., the game shall be forfeited, and the coaches shall make up two (2) teams and play a practice game.
- F. Game duration will be four innings unless time restraints prohibit the completion. The game should last approximately 1 ½ hours (90 minutes). No new inning should be started that cannot be reasonably completed within the 90-minute time limit on a weeknight or by the 90-minute time limit from the start of a Saturday game.
- G. Bad weather or field conditions may result in the postponement of a game. Having no league official in attendance, the home team manager will make the final decision. In the event of lightning or thunder, all games and practices must be held up until safe conditions are apparent (refer to storm policy). The Park District asks coaches to reschedule games if the field is too wet, rather than cause serious damage to the infield and turf areas (refer to the ball field use guidelines). Canceled games are to be rescheduled through the league vice-president as soon as possible.
- H. Players, managers, coaches or spectators are not allowed to stand behind the backstop in the area directly behind home plate. It is the responsibility of both managers to keep this area clear.
- I. Any player who has a bleeding injury **must** leave the field immediately. A player may return once the bleeding has been contained. This rule must be followed to ensure the safety of all players and officials.

III. EQUIPMENT

- A. Batting helmets must be worn by the batter and all base runners. (no catcher position)
- B. Baseball bats in excess of $2\frac{5}{8}$ inches in diameter are prohibited.

IV. OFFENSE

- A. The batting rotation shall consist of all team players in attendance at the game. This means that if twelve (12) players are in attendance, all twelve must bat in order before the first player comes to bat again. All players arriving late to a game must be inserted at the bottom of the batting order as it was at the beginning of the game and shall bat the first time that position comes up.
- B. All players in attendance will bat in each inning regardless of the number of outs recorded. Acknowledge outs made by the defense, but the runner stays on the base.
- C. There will be no "on deck circle" for practice swings either inside or outside the field fencing. All practice swings will be done at home plate. This is a safety issue due to the number of siblings and small children who attend the games.
- D. A batter must take a regular full swing at the ball, with an automatic out occurring if the ball is intentionally bunted.
- E. A batter who throws the bat, even accidentally, shall be given a warning. Subsequent offenses by the same batter shall result in an automatic out, and all base runners must return to their original bases.
- F. Only the hitting coach at home plate is allowed to adjust the tee for the batter. The coach behind the plate is required to remove the tee from home plate after the ball has been hit.
- G. A ball is hit fair if it is between the foul lines and is at least fifteen (15) feet in front of the tee (i.e. beyond the arc in front of home plate) when it rolls dead or is first touched by a defensive player. All other hit balls or missed swings are considered to be foul balls. There are no strike outs.
- H. Base stealing is not allowed. Base runners must be in contact with the base at the time the ball is hit. Leaving a base too soon shall result in an automatic out for the runner and all action being replayed.
- I. Adult coaches are allowed at first and third base. These coaches must remain at least three (3) feet from the base line. Any physical contact with the runner(s) during a play will result in the automatic out of that runner(s).

V. DEFENSE

- A. There is no designated catcher at this level. (safety concern)
- B. A team may play a maximum of nine (9) players on the field. All defensive players shall generally play regular baseball positions, except that there is no catcher. The ninth player usually is positioned near 2nd base or as an extra outfielder. The ninth player is allowed to rotate his position on the field during the inning, providing such rotating does not delay the normal process of the game. The ninth player is the only player allowed to change defensive position during an inning.
- C. No defensive player, except the pitcher shall be closer than forty-five (45) feet to the batter when the ball is hit. The pitcher shall remain in contact with the rubber until the ball is hit.

D. **Definitions:**

"Possession" is defined as having the ball in one's hand or glove.

"Infield area" is defined as the imaginary rectangle formed by the extension of the backstop to a point five (5) feet beyond first and third base and turning at 90-degree angles to intersect approximately seven (7) feet behind second base.

The **"outfield area"** is the area beyond the "infield area" and within the imaginary extension of the backstop.

"Going to" is defined as being definitely on the way to the next base. Simply being past the previous base does not automatically qualify the runner as being on the way to the next base. It is important to note that a runner is eligible to be thrown out even if they are not entitled to the base they are attempting to advance to. If a player has advanced safely to a base beyond which they are entitled, the runner is awarded a safe return to the prior base once the ball is dead and the play over.

- E. Teaching the fielders to make basic baseball plays without fear of the impact of potential failure is important to the development of the defensive player. Therefore, the following rules apply to what base a runner is entitled to as a result of a hit fair ball:

A hit fair ball initially hit to the "infield area" or "outfield area". The batter is entitled to only one base, regardless of whether the retrieved ball is held or thrown. No extra bases will be allowed for overthrows.

Any existing base runners are also entitled to advance only one base on a hit fair ball.

- F. Time out shall not be called until the ball is considered "dead".

- G. Free substitution is permitted on defense, except that such substitutions can take place only between innings. During an inning a player cannot be brought off the bench to play except in the event of an injury. Players cannot change positions during an inning with the exception of the tenth player as described in rule A.
- H. All attending players shall receive equal playing time and must play defense at least three (3) innings per game. No player shall sit out two consecutive innings. It is recommended that managers rotate all players rather than simply platoon the lesser defensive players.
- I. No player shall play the same position more than one (1) inning in any game.
- J. A maximum of two (2) adult (at least 18 years old) defensive coaches may be positioned in the "outfield area" for the purpose of giving placement and throwing advice to the defensive players on the field.

VI. EQUIPMENT RETURNS

All equipment is to be returned in accordance with the Equipment Managers published schedule. Managers who fail to do so may not be allowed to manage the next season.