



HOPEDALE YOUTH BASEBALL ASSOCIATION LEAGUE RULES

TEE BALL LEAGUE COACHES GUIDE

OBJECTIVES:

- To have fun
- For everyone to participate
- To learn fundamentals and improve skills in baseball
- To provide a safe learning environment for all players.
- HYBA endeavors to create a positive atmosphere by emphasizing good sportsmanship, team environment and showing support and patience for all athletes and volunteers.

CONDUCT:

All adults, both coaches and parents, are expected to show good sportsmanship. Be as supportive as possible, praise players for making a good effort as well as when they do well.

Opponents should be treated respectfully. Do not allow your players to use abusive or discriminating language. Correct children who laugh, make fun, or make negative comments toward other children. At the end of the game both teams line up and shake hands. **“Good game”** or like praise should be used. Instruct players not to use negative comments.

SCHEDULE:

Weekday Tee Ball League games start promptly at **5:30 pm**. Weekend dates may be reserved for makeup games and practices. Please refer to league schedule for specific dates and times.

Generally, the first 30 minutes are devoted to practice with the remaining time for the actual game. There should be plenty of time for three full innings and possibly four. Please try and keep the games moving along.

Whenever field conditions are questionable, the League Coordinator will determine if the game is to be played. Coaches in turn, are responsible to notify parents if the games are cancelled. Games can be made up on weekdays/weekends but must be scheduled through the League Coordinator.

PARTICIPATION:

A primary objective is to provide all players with an opportunity to participate as much as possible. Every child who shows up will play the entire game. This will at times result in an unequal number of players on opposing teams but should not have an effect on the game.



COACHING:

Coaches in Tee Ball League must keep the objectives of the league in mind. First and foremost, kids should be having fun. Please be as positive as possible and refrain from negative reinforcement. All Tee Ball coaches should be on the field with their team during games. This will provide for more hands-on instruction and immediate explanation. It is much easier to instruct from the field than from the sidelines. Take time to demonstrate correct techniques rather than just telling them how to do something.

GENERAL RULES:

- All players bat during an inning. Make an effort to rotate your batting order each inning. The inning is over after the last batter hits and runs the bases. Keep players in the field until the last runner crosses home plate.
- This is Tee Ball. There will be no pitching to batters. Emphasis should be on correct stance, hand position and swing. Repetition of these fundamentals and concentration on the ball on the tee teaches children how to hit not wild swings at even wilder pitches. This also keeps the games moving along, as well as all children interested and involved.

SKILLS AND FUNDAMENTALS:

Baseball is a game of a few basic elements. You must be able to hit, throw, catch a baseball and run the bases. Toward this end, an emphasis should be on teaching these four skills starting with a solid foundation in the fundamentals of each skill. Break down the elements of each skill teaching a progression of the elements leading towards this foundation.

- Hitting - Skills needed to hit consist of hand/eye coordination, correct feet position (stance), hand position and good balance. Comfort in stance and consistency in swing are things to look for.
- Throwing - Teach proper form, bending elbow the elbow instead of a straight arm, use of opposite leg for direction and proper follow through. Start with short throws and when fundamentals are correct extend the length.
- Catching - Perhaps the most difficult skill for a beginner is learning to catch. Demonstrate correct hand and glove position for all throws (low, high, left and right). Use of free hand to close glove around the ball. Begin with very short tosses. For ground balls demonstrate feet position, knees bent not back, glove open and in front to the ground.



EQUIPMENT:

It is the responsibility of each coach to maintain equipment for the entire season. Please do not lend out equipment for any purpose. Equipment is to be used for your team's games and practices only. Please regard equipment as if it were your own. It is the largest expense of running the league and we count on the coaches to help keep it in good condition. If you have equipment which is showing wear and tear please notify the League Coordinator. If necessary the League Coordinator will repair or replace.

Baseballs should not be passed out after games. Please retain the game balls to use for practice. Please turn in all baseballs you have left at the end of season. These will be used to begin the next season's practices.

SAFETY:

Helmets with cages will be provided by HYBA and available for all players. Players and parents who provide their own baseball helmet will have the option to play with or without the cage. The player on deck must be wearing a batting helmet and remain in the on-deck area. Keep all equipment and players except on-deck batter behind the dugout fence. Bench coaches should ensure that everyone but the on-deck batter remain sitting on the bench. Bench coaches should also be aware of other personnel (younger children) coming near the on-deck area.

The League maintains complete first aid essentials, including ice packs, at the concession stand.