



# Tomball Little League Machine Pitch Rules

These supplemental rules are to be used in conjunction with the Official Little League Rulebook. League Reps/Executive Board/UIC have final discretion of any disputed rules

1. PLACEMENT OF THE MACHINE:
  - a. Games will be played with a pitching machine placed at 46 feet from the plate
  - b. The safety circle area is designated as the area of dirt around which the machine sits. The pitcher must stand to the side of the machine in the mound circle while the ball is placed in the machine. Other fielders may not enter this safety circle at any time in the game
2. RULINGS INVOLVING THE MACHINE
  - a. If a batted ball hits the pitching machine, electrical cord, or the coach/umpire feeding the machine the ball is Dead. The batter is awarded 1st base and runners advance one base
  - b. If a batted ball lands within the pitching mound and comes to rest without touching anything the play is live and the pitcher must retrieve the ball
  - c. All other balls put into play near or around pitching machine are treated as live balls
3. ADJUSTMENT OF MACHINE:
  - a. The pitching machine will be set at 45 Mph for the 7/8U machine pitch division
  - b. The machine will be adjusted for accuracy at the beginning of the game by both managers or the umpire
  - c. The machine may be adjusted for accuracy at the beginning of each offensive half inning by the coaches of the batting team. Any subsequent adjustment is at the umpires' discretion or after two consecutive balls
4. ADULT PLACEMENT:
  - a. When a team is batting, two adult base coaches are permitted (one at first base and one at third base). At least one adult volunteer will be in the dugout at all times to maintain order. The base coaches must stay in the coaches boxes at all times during play. Defensive coaches need to be in the dugout or close to the dugout fence
  - b. An adult will pitch to the offensive team's batters by feeding balls into the pitching machine from within the safety circle. This adult shall be one of the following:
    1. A parent from the offensive team who is an approved volunteer
    2. A coach/manager from the offensive team
  - c. The adult feeding the machine must remain on the pitcher's mound at all times during play
  - d. The adult feeding the machine will NOT be allowed to coach in any manner during this half of the inning
  - e. The adult feeding the machine shall feed the machine with the laces of the baseball running parallel with the wheel in order to pitch a straight ball. The adult shall not turn the ball with laces running perpendicular to the wheel as this will result in a ball that drops much like a curve ball
  - f. If, in the umpire's judgment, any action by the adult pitcher interferes with a play in progress, the umpire will declare a "dead ball" and will take such action, as the umpire deems appropriate to the situation
  - g. Adult feeding machine will place ball into the machine immediately after presenting it to the batter
  - h. TWO defensive coaches are allowed on the field for the first 4 games only. They must be in the OUTFIELD

## 5. PLAYERS

- a. All teams will be allowed to have 10 players on the field. If a team cannot field all players, they may play with as few as 8 players
- b. If your team is going to be short (LESS THAN NINE), you must contact the Division Player Rep at least three (3) hours before game time to obtain a player(s) who will pick from the player pool list from within the same division to get to the required minimum or up to the ninth player Regulation V(c)
  - At no time is a team allowed to pick up more than TWO players to reach their minimum number of players required to play a regulation game
  - The pool player must play the outfield the entire game and they must bat at the end of the lineup
  - This pick-up player rule will be suspended for the end of season tournament. Teams that can't field the minimum number of players during the end of season tournament will forfeit the game
- c. All players must play at least six consecutive defensive outs and bat at least once
- d. Players are allowed to arrive late and be added to the end of the lineup
- e. Players are allowed to switch positions in the middle of the inning

## 6. DEFENSE:

- a. The defensive team will have four outfielders all playing in the grass. A short fielder may be used but must play and remain in the outfield grass area
- a. The player playing the position of pitcher on the team in the field does not pitch; he/she is a fielder only. He/She must begin each pitch at a distance from the plate even with the pitching machine behind one of the chalk lines (rubber) to the right or left of the machine. For safety reasons, he/she cannot leave this position, even on an attempted bunt, until the ball exits the pitching machine and crosses home plate. He/She must wear a batting helmet at all times on the field. A helmet with a facemask is optional

## 7. BATTING ORDER

- a. A continuous/perpetual batting will be used with all players batting. This lineup should be submitted to Rep prior to opening day & can be changed ONCE during the season prior to the 5<sup>th</sup> game. After the start of the 5<sup>th</sup> game, the lineup is set

## 8. GAME RULES:

- a. An inning will end when the batting team has scored 5 runs or three outs are recorded (whichever comes first). The five-run rule will be removed in the sixth inning (Ties are allowed)
- b. Each batter may receive up to 4 pitches (can strike out in 3)
- a. Foul balls on the third strike do not count against the batter. If a third strike is bunted foul, the batter is out.
- b. STRIKES can be called
- c. STOPPAGE OF PLAY: Play is over when the advancement of the lead runner is stopped. The umpire will call time at that point.
- d. STEALING: Stealing is allowed for Machine Pitch, but the base runner cannot leave base until the ball has crossed home plate. Runners may NOT advance to the next base if there is an overthrow of the attempted steal. Runners may steal home, however, ONLY on a passed ball. They cannot steal home on a throwback to the pitcher. They cannot steal home on a 'double steal'
- e. INFIELD FLY RULE: Will not apply
- f. BUNTING: IS ALLOWED during the entire season. No player is allowed to "fake bunt." If the batter squares around to bunt and then swings away he is automatically out.

9. EQUIPMENT:

- a. Catchers are required to wear full gear including a cup and throat guard. Pitchers are required to wear a helmet when on the mound. Players must be in FULL Little League Uniform. Bats must be on Approved list for Little League Play

10. TEAM DUTIES:

- a. The home team is responsible for providing a scorekeeper. The visiting team is responsible for working the scoreboard & announcing
- b. Early games: Home team is responsible for getting the machine set up.
- c. Ending of game: Once the game is complete clear the dugout and fields as quickly as possible to allow preparation for the next game  
Last game of the day: Visiting team is responsible for putting the machine back in the equipment shed and the home team is responsible for bases and watering. Everyone is responsible for picking up their dugouts and stands to keep them clean for the next game. PLEASE empty dugout trash can into larger cans outside the fields
- d. Reporting of score: the winning team manager is responsible for texting the score immediately to the Vice President of the board (1-2 hours) or the game will be entered as a tie. TEXT FORMAT: division / date / teams. EXAMPLE: "8yo Saturday 3/23 Rangers 12 - Red sox 9"