

**SOUTHWEST BASEBALL ASSOCIATION  
CLARKDALE FIELD  
AUSTELL, GEORGIA  
T-BALL PLAYING RULES**

**Any rules not covered by the park rules, league rules, or Cal Ripken rules are covered by the Official Baseball Rules of Major League Baseball and the National Association of Professional Baseball Leagues**

1. Should games be scheduled on school nights, they shall begin no later than 8:00 P.M. and be completed no later than 10:00 P.M.
2. All make up games shall be rescheduled by the President or Vice President, if time is permitting within the season playing schedule. Rain-out games will be rescheduled if time permits.
3. Officers, Coaches and other officials will maintain only the highest level of moral conduct. No drinking, cursing, abusive language or physical abuse of children will be permitted at any Association function. No smoking in the dugout.
4. The home team will be responsible for playing fields to be marked off properly.
5. Minimum age to play T-Ball is 4 years of age. Maximum age to play in the T-Ball League is 6 years of age. The child cannot turn 7 prior to May 01, of the current playing season.
6. Practice will start on a date designated by the President.
7. Protest: (Please remember that the children only want to play ball and protest should be avoided at all cost! Please try to discuss the situation in a reasonable manner with the other coach/umpire before resorting to this.)
8. \$25.00 cash protest fee must be deposited with the Rules & Grievances Chairperson, and/or the President or Vice President. If the protest is upheld the \$25.00 fee will be returned. If not the fee goes into the Association treasury.
9. Protest must be submitted before the next ball is pitched.
10. The protest is to be decided at the time of protest if possible.
11. After official registration ends and the team rosters are full, a waiting list will be formed in chronological order (by date) and should any vacancy in the proper age bracket come open, the first child will be placed on the team that has ten (10) or less players. This shall be kept by the President or Registration Chairperson.
12. Teams will consist of a maximum of 12 players.
13. Team assignment cut-off will be after the second full week of play.
14. The home teams score book is the official score book. Scorekeepers shall check scores between innings if necessary.

15. All children will be treated equally.

## ***Team Selection***

1. Teams will consist of a maximum of 12 players.
2. Team assignment cut-off will be after the second full week of play.
3. Teams will be picked on a date designated by the President.
4. All players will enter into the draft each year, except for Pre-Ball & T-Ball and players returning to the same team IN THE SAME AGE GROUP as the previous spring season.
5. The number of teams in each division will be determined by the number of eligible registrant at the end of the advertised registration.
6. Allowable consideration will be given for transportation problems in placing players on teams, but is not guaranteed.
7. Southwest Baseball Association reserves the right to place players on teams due to extenuating circumstances as determined by the President and agreed to by the League Director.
8. Parents have the option to name one (1) manager for which they will not allow their child to play. This must be given in writing to the President prior to team selection.
9. Parents have the option of requesting a coach/team for their child. No team or coach is guaranteed.
10. Teams are selected in the following order:
  - a. All returning players to the same team in the SAME AGE GROUP from the previous Spring Season.
  - b. Coaches Child
  - c. Coach/team request.
  - d. If there are more players than will fit on one team at the time of selection to keep teams even, requests are granted on a first come, first FULLY PAID basis.
  - e. After all returning players and requests have been satisfied, the remaining players will be selected based on age of player to attempt to even out the median age of each team.
11. The Head Coach is NOT involved in the team selection process at any time.
12. Head Coaches have the right to request a child not return their team. The President will decide if the request is in the best interest of the child.
13. Sons/Daughters of the manager and one (1) coach will automatically be assigned to their teams. The selection of the team will then be made.
14. There shall be no trades.
15. Should a player choose not to be coached by a particular head or assistant coach no discussion between the coach(es) and that player or their family may take place unless such is initiated by the player's family.

16. Players registering after the team selection will be put on teams only if there is room on the rosters. Players will be placed on the team that was scheduled to next receive a player.
17. If a team has lost a player since the team selection they will automatically be assigned the next available player (s) until such time that they have the same roster size as when the team selection was completed.
18. No refunds of any kind are made after team selection.

## ***Fall Baseball***

1. The Fall-Ball program intended to be a season of instruction and having fun. All players move up an age bracket from where they played in the spring. This will allow the players to start learning the new age group rules and some different positions. The Fall-Ball season is a non-competitive season.
2. We encourage playing the participants in positions they may not get a chance to play in the spring season. We ask that coaches teach the players how the game is played, techniques of the game, the responsibilities of each player's position(s) on the field, good sportsmanship, etc.
3. All games will be played within time limits only.

## ***Coaching***

1. Head Coaches are selected by the President & Vice President as volunteers from within the organization. Each Head Coach must fill out a coaches' application form and must pass a criminal background check prior to the selection of teams.
2. Anyone may volunteer to be a Head Coach or Assistant Coach. However, no Head Coach will be allowed to Head Coach two teams in the same season at the same time.
3. Coaches are chosen based off of seniority in the following order:
  - a. Returning Head Coach from Spring Season of the previous year to the SAME AGE GROUP.
  - b. Returning Assistant Coach taking over as Head Coach, from the previous year to the SAME AGE GROUP.
  - c. Head Coach moving up to age group with CONSECUTIVE Spring season seniority.
  - d. Assistant Coach moving up to age group with CONSECUTIVE Spring Season seniority.
  - e. Parent moving up to age group with previous playing consecutive Spring Season seniority.
4. The Board of Directors reserves the right to remove or deny any Head Coach at any time from their responsibility with a majority vote from the Board or automatically after 3 ejections.
5. Any Assistant Coach will be removed from their responsibility after 2 ejections.
6. Only three (3) adult coaches (21 or over) will be allowed on the field per team, and one (1) adult in the dugout. A maximum of four (4) adults are allowed in the dugout.
7. Coaches must remain in the dugout behind the fenced area at all times unless their team is on the field. Example: first or third base coach. Coaches must remain in the coach's boxes.
8. Coaches must call time-out before coming out of the dugout or the coach's box. No coach may approach the official until properly calling time out. Note: The penalty for ignoring this rule is automatic ejection.

9. All coaches will clean up their dugout before leaving the field.
10. Defensive teams may have two (3) coaches on the playing field, but they must remain behind an imaginary line extending between 1st and 3rd base and one (1) behind home plate to return the pitched ball.

### ***Game Length***

1. A complete game consists of a minimum of two (2) innings or 1 hour of play. Should a game be tied at this point, no extra innings will begin after the 1 hour mark. Time will be called after a maximum of 1 hour and 15 minutes AND the completion of the current inning. If the game is still tied at this point, it will count as a tie game. If an inning is started prior to the 1 hour cutoff, the home team will be allowed to bat unless the visitors are ahead by more than 6 runs.
2. An inning will be after all players have batted or three outs occur. Batting rotation will be based on your team's number of batters regardless of the opposing team's number of batters.
3. A game will be six (6) innings in duration and each inning shall be played with a maximum of five (5) runs scored per team or three (3) outs. The game will be called no earlier than the completed fourth (4<sup>th</sup>) inning if the team is mathematically eliminated or time limit. This constitutes a complete game.

### ***Player Eligibility***

1. A minimum of six (6) players are required to play a game. A team with less than 6 players will forfeit the game. It will be an option of the coaches of each team if they would like to use the field for a practice game during their allotted time.
2. All players on a team shall wear association issued uniforms (hat, jersey & socks) and matching baseball pants (color to be determined by the parents and coaches of each team and purchased by the child's parents)
3. When the batter approaches the plate, the batter's number must be visible at all times while batting.
4. If his safety is in jeopardy, any child on the field playing and not paying attention to the game may be removed from the field.
5. Continuous Batting Order: All coaches will hand in an official line up to the official scorekeeper and opponents. The team scorekeeper will list all players on their team playing in that game. This will show each player in the batting order. Any player not listed will not participate in the game, unless the player gets to the field within a 15 minute grace period. If a player comes to a game within 15 minutes of the starting of the game, he can be added to the bottom of the batting order. Note: Any player not in the dugout within the 15 minute grace period will not play in that game. The 15 minute grace period does not affect the starting time of the game. There will be no delay of games for this reason.
6. In case of an injured player please note the following options: (Option must be made prior to the next batter batting)
  - a. Player may be removed from the game and or batter order and the team will not be penalized with a continued out. If this option is taken the player will not be allowed to return during the remainder of the game.
  - b. Player may remain in the batting order, and the team will take an automatic out upon his turn at bat, until the player returns at his/her discretion.
  - c. Players leaving the game due to not feeling like playing or sickness will continue to incur an out each time they are due to bat.

## ***Batting***

1. If a batter slings a bat or helmet, the batter will be called out, and all other runners will be returned to the base they were at prior to the violation.
2. The player must be prepared to bat at his turn. No delay of game will be allowed for coach instruction at the time of bat while the player is at the plate.
3. When an improper batter becomes a runner or is put out, and the defensive team appeals to the umpire before the first pitch to the next batter of the either team , or before any play or attempted play, the umpire shall (1) declare the proper batter out; and (2) nullify any advance or score made because of a ball batted by the improper batter or because of the improper batter's advance to first base on a hit, an error, a base on balls, a hit batter or otherwise. The proper batter may take his place in the batter's box at any time before the improper batter becomes a runner or is put out, and any balls and strikes shall be counted in the proper batter's time at bat.
4. There will be no infield fly rule.
5. A batter will be allowed a maximum of seven (7) *swings (4 pitches from their coach/ 3 tries off a tee)* to hit the ball fair. Provided the ball is hit off the tee but is foul on the 3rd swing or after, the batter will be allowed to continue to attempt to hit the ball. If this is not accomplished the batter will be called out.
6. The ball must cross or stop on the 20 foot line in front of home plate to be considered a fair ball.

## ***Base Running***

1. In case of injury, the base runner is awarded only the base he is running to, provided there is interference or he is hit by a thrown ball.
2. A base runner hit by a batted ball will be called out. Batter and other runners may advance to the base they are going to.
3. If a base runner runs into a fielder while the fielder is making a play on the ball, the base runner will be called out.
4. If a base runner runs into a fielder and the fielder was in the base line and not making a play on the ball, the base runner will be awarded the base they are going to.
5. Players are not permitted to steal or lead off base. Penalty: Player will be called back and coaches warned. Repeated offense - player will be called out.
6. Base runners may not advance on overthrown balls that cross the *first base foul line* provided that is the first attempt at a play on that ball. Secondary plays made at first base will be counted as fair play, and runners may advance.
7. When the ball is thrown into the circle to stop play, and the runner is over halfway to the next base, he will be given that next base if the base is unoccupied. If not, he must return to the previous base.

## ***Pitching***

1. The child pitcher must remain on the pitchers rubber until the ball is hit or the pitcher may stand to the left or right of the rubber if the opposing coach is pitching.
2. No child "pitcher" may pitch more than two (2) innings in any game.
3. There will be a ten (10) foot circle drawn around the pitcher's mound. Play will be stopped based on the following circumstances:
  - a. When the ball is returned towards the pitcher's mound and enters the 10 foot circle. The ball needs only to pass through the circle; it does not have to stop within the circle for the play to stop.
  - b. When players have ceased advancing toward the next base (Example: The defensive team holds a player at any base. Same as regular baseball except no further advancing after play has stopped).  
*Note: If a play is being made at a base or plate, and the ball or player carrying the ball moves through the circle, play will not be stopped and all runners may advance.*
4. Any coach pitching to any batter will not stand closer than 25 feet.
5. If the coach pitcher is hit by any batted ball, the ball will be declared dead and treated as a foul ball - all play will stop.
6. The child pitcher must be equipped with a protective face mask.

### ***Basic Fielding/Positions***

1. The defensive team will provide one (1) coach to return the ball to the pitching coach during play. The defensive team has the option to provide a player to act as a catcher, but the coach must return the ball to the pitcher to speed up play. The catcher must be equipped with mask, helmet and chest protector. The defensive coach must remain out of the way of a play if a runner is attempting to make it home.
2. No more than six (6) players will play in the infield.
3. There will be no intentional underhand throwing of the baseball to any bases unless the player is in a prone or otherwise position which makes the rolling of the ball the only way to reach the base. All of the throws must begin as an overhand thrown ball and making an attempt to throw to the glove. Note: Please begin to teach your players the correct way to throw the ball.
4. Any batter advancing to 1st base and tagged with the ball in a rundown by any player other than the 1st baseman will be considered safe. All plays at 1st base must be made by the 1st baseman or from a qualified overhand throw.
5. No player will play forward of an imaginary line from the pitchers rubber to first or third base. Only the pitcher will be allowed to advance to this area once the ball has been hit to avoid potential collisions in this small area.

### ***T-Ball Playing Rules & General Information***

T-Ball is designed to provide kids ages 4-6 with some fun and to learn something about our national pastime. All pressure should be held to a minimum. No child should be criticized or made to feel bad because he did not make a play as hoped. All parents should understand that criticism can be detrimental to a child this age, and it is suggested that a team meeting should be held before the beginning of the season to discuss this with the parent. In addition, the following items should be included in your practice routine and be a major part of your main focus of instruction. At this age, it is not important whether we win or lose; leave that for the next league.

1. How to throw a ball overhand from the correct foot: (a) Step forward with your left foot for right-handers (b) Step forward with your right foot for left-handers.
2. How to catch (or hold the glove) for both ground balls and fly balls.
3. Help them to think ahead and know where the play should be made if the ball is hit to them.
4. Teach them how to be a part of the "team, that there should be no fighting over a ball, and that every member of the team is as important as the next player.
5. Remember that getting three (3) outs before all batters have batted is a major miracle and is not to be expected, but it would be advisable to let the children know that should this occur during the inning they may not get to bat, but that they are on a list and will get to bat when their turn comes up on the next inning. Children usually cope better when they are prepared and given enough information.

### ***All Star Team Selection***

1. Minimum age to play T-Ball All Stars is 5 years of age. Maximum age to play in the T-Ball League is 6 years of age. The child cannot turn 7 prior to May 01, of the current playing season.
2. At a time designated by the President, an All Star Head Coach for each age group will be selected by a majority vote of the Head Coaches in that age group. If a decision can not be reached. The Head Coach with most seniority will be chosen. If there is still no determination, the Board of Directors will determine the Head Coach by a majority vote. Season standings will at no point count in the selection process of the Head Coach for the All Star Team.
3. At a time designated by the President, each Head Coach will NOMINATE players for the All Star team. It is in the best interest of the players and the teams that the Head Coach only nominate players that are considered the top players of his team and not the entire team. Nominations should at no time be discussed with the players or others parents.
4. The Head Coach will approach the parents of players he wishes to nominate and have them fill out the All Star nomination agreement. This agreement does not guarantee the child playing time or a spot on the All Star team. It is intended only to make sure the parents are aware of the financial and time obligation of being chosen to the team.
5. A list of nominations for each team are compiled and all Head Coaches will spend time evaluating all of the nominations.
6. Each nomination must have a completed All Star Nomination Agreement Form BEFORE the vote begins. If there is no form, the child is removed from the vote with no opportunity to make the team.
7. At a time designated by the President, all Head Coaches of the same age group will meet and cast their vote for the top 10 players from the nomination list. Head Coaches are NOT ALLOWED to vote for any of the nominated players off of their own team.
8. The votes are tallied and the top 10 players with the most votes automatically make up the core of the team.
9. If there is a tie to determine the top 10 players, then players will be added to the team up to 13 players.

10. If there is no tie and 10 players are clearly selected, the Head Coach of the All Star team can choose the 3 remaining players from the approved nominated players.
11. The All Star team in the T-Ball age group will carry no more than 13 players, but may carry 12 players if the Head Coach chooses.
12. The complete dues must be received from the All Star Players before uniforms are purchased. If dues are not received, the player will be dropped from the team.
13. The All Star team will be announced at closing ceremonies. No player shall be announced prior to this date.
14. No All Star team may practice prior to the date selected by the President.
15. If a player quits the team for any reason, it is the Head Coaches decision to allow the player to return the team.
16. Once All Star teams are chosen, they are run at the expense and direction of the team.
17. No playing time is guaranteed on the All Star team.