

AYLMER PIRATES



Rookie Ball Parent Guide

Rev. January 26, 2017

Introduction

Welcome to Aylmer Minor Baseball's Rookie Ball program. This is a non-competitive, instructional program with an emphasis on teaching the fundamentals of baseball, having fun and stressing good sportsmanship.

Each Rookie Ball session will be approximately 90 minutes in length. Depending on the number of teams, sessions may consist of all game time or a schedule of rotating practices and games. The first session will consist entirely of practice time in order to re-introduce the participants to the fundamentals of the game and also serve as an evaluation session to ensure the teams are evenly matched.

Equipment

Rookie Ball is played on a regular diamond with regular baseball equipment. Balls are pitched via a pitching machine in order to allow the players to learn how to hit pitched balls in a safe and controlled environment

The following equipment will be given to each team or made available at each session:

- Bats (not exceeding 2 ¾ diameter)
- Bases
- Hitting tee's
- Helmets
- Baseballs
- Catchers equipment
- Assorted training equipment
- Pitching machine
- Electrical cord

The Game

Most of the standard Rookie Ball Rules published in the 2017 Baseball Ontario Constitution and By-Laws manual shall apply with some exceptions. The main rules and exceptions are as follows.

Pitching Machine

- Pitching machine is placed a distance of 44 feet from home plate.
- An 8ft diameter safety circle shall be marked off around the pitching machine. No player shall enter this safety circle. Any ball that lands inside the safety circle shall be declared a dead ball and will be retrieved by a coach.

- The pitching machine can be altered only at the end an inning. Machine speed should be set to a maximum of 40mph and a minimum of 30mph. Height can be adjusted at any time.
- A ball that contacts the pitching machine will be called dead. The hitter will be given first base and each base runner will advance to the next base.
- One offensive coach will be required to feed balls into the pitching machine. This coach must avoid the live play and must not make contact with a hit ball or any defensive player.

Hitting

- The batting order will be determined prior to the start of the game and will not change during the game. The batting order should be rotated each game to ensure each player gets to hit at the top of the batting order.
- A hitter will receive a maximum of 5 strikes to hit the ball. A foul ball does not count as a fifth strike. If the player does not hit the ball after receiving 5 strikes they will hit from the tee.
- Batters must not throw the bat (intentional or unintentional) upon hitting the ball. After a thrown bat the play will be called dead. Players will receive one warning and a chance to hit again from the same strike count. Any further instances by the same player will result in the player being called out. All base runners will return to their starting base.
- No bunts or walks.
- Infield fly rule does not apply.
- Bats shall not exceed 2 ¾ diameter. Players may use their own bats if they are baseball approved. No softball bats will be used.

Fielding

- One defensive coach will be allowed on the field to assist players. The coach must stand just outside of the infield.
- Defensive player in the pitching position must wear a helmet with a mask and be positioned behind the release point of the pitching machine.
- Defensive player in the catcher's position must wear catcher's equipment. A defensive coach may fill this position in the event there are not enough defensive players.
- There will be a maximum of 10 defensive positions consisting of 6 infielders and 4 outfielders.
- All players must play a different position from game to game. A player does not have to play certain positions such as catcher, pitcher or first base if they are not comfortable or not able to safely play the position.

Base Running

- Runners cannot leave the base until the batter makes contact with the ball. Infractions will result in a dead ball and one warning. If player continues to lead off they will be called out. No stealing.
- In the case of a passed ball the base runner may only proceed to the base they are heading to. No extra base shall be awarded.
- Once a defensive player has gained control of the ball in the infield the base runners may only proceed to the base they were on path to.
- If the ball is hit into the outfield the base runners may advance until the ball is brought back into the infield.

General

- If a team has less than 5 players they may borrow enough players from the practice team to field 7 players.
- Each half inning will end after either 3 outs or once the batting team has hit through their entire batting order once. The last batter of the order must be declared by the offensive coach and acknowledged by the defensive team. If there are less than two outs the pitcher or catcher must have the ball and touch home plate to end the inning and stop any runs from counting. In the instance that the teams do not have the same number of players the team with the lesser number of players shall have the same number of at bats per inning.
- A regulation baseball or any ball approved by the AMBA board will be provided for all games.
- No new inning shall be started after 7:45pm.
- Maximum number of innings to be played is 7 with a full game being 5 innings.
- No smoking or inappropriate language shall be used on the baseball grounds.
- The home team shall help setup the field and the visiting team shall help take down the field.
- Home teams use the first base dugout and visitor teams use the third base dugout.
- Infield practice can be held prior to the start of the game. Coaches should coordinate to share the field. Teams can practice together.
- A copy of the lineup should be shared with the other teams score keeper prior to the game.

Field Setup

- Pitching machine setup 44 feet from the back of home plate.
- Bases are 60 feet apart.
- An 8 foot diameter circle will be drawn around the pitching machine.
- Standard batters boxes and foul line marking.

Tips and Fundamentals

The below tips and fundamentals are to be used as a guide and should not be considered absolute.

Hitting Fundamentals

- Bat selection – the proper bat size for the average rookie ball player should be between 26-28 inches and 16-19 ounces (see chart below)
- Batters should stand adjacent to plate in an athletic position (feet shoulder width apart, back straight, and bent slightly at waist with butt out). Hands holding the bat should be together (not spaced) and above shoulder. Be sure to have players stand back far enough to be able to extend arms as the tendency at this age is to stand too close to the tee or plate.
- Beginners should swing in balance without spinning around, starting with the weight back. Follow through over opposite shoulder. Do not let the bat go.
- Advanced players can be taught the use of a timing step. Transferring power from the back leg forward.

WEIGHT	HEIGHT									
	3'-3'4"	3'5"-3'8"	3'9"-4'	4'1"-4'4"	4'5"-4'8"	4'9"-5'	5'1"-5'4"	5'5"-5'8"	5'9"-6'	6'1"-over
Under 60 Lbs	26"	27"	28"	29"	29"					
61 - 70	27"	27"	28"	29"	30"	30"				
71 - 80		28"	28"	29"	30"	30"	31"			
81 - 90		28"	29"	29"	30"	30"	31"	32"		
91 - 100		28"	29"	30"	30"	31"	31"	32"		
101 - 110		29"	29"	30"	30"	31"	31"	32"		
111 - 120		29"	29"	30"	30"	31"	31"	32"		
121 - 130		29"	30"	30"	30"	31"	32"	33"	33"	
131 - 140		29"	30"	30"	31"	31"	32"	33"	33"	
141 - 150			30"	30"	31"	31"	32"	33"	33"	
151 - 160			30"	31"	31"	32"	32"	33"	33"	33"
161 - 170				31"	31"	32"	32"	33"	33"	34"
171 - 180						32"	33"	33"	34"	34"
over 180							33"	33"	34"	34"

MOST POPULAR LENGTH BY AGE						
AGE	5-7	8-9	10	11-12	13-14	15-16
LENGTH	24"-26"	26"-28"	28"-29"	30"-31"	31"-32"	32"-33"

Catching and Fielding Fundamentals

- Be prepared - knees slightly bent and weight on the balls of their feet
- Balls thrown above the waist should be caught with thumbs together.
- Balls thrown below the waist should be caught with pinkies together.
- Ground balls should be fielded with 2 hands either in the “alligator” position or with pinkies together with palms up starting with hand(s) on the ground.
- Move to catch the ball.

Throwing Fundamentals

- Grip ball along the seam with two or three fingers along with the thumb.
- Point shoulder to target when setting up to throw.
- Throwing arm should be even or above the height of the shoulder.
- Step with opposite leg toward target when throwing.
- Follow-through to opposite pocket when throwing.

Base Running Fundamentals

- After hitting the ball, lay bat down – do not throw bat!
- Run directly to the base.
- Run through first base – teach player to not stop at the base.
- Tail towards foul territory on base hit to first base, trail towards fair territory if there is a chance for extra bases.

Remember to keep the fundamentals fun, basic and simple after all, the key to learning is by doing!

Thank you for choosing Aylmer Minor Baseball. If you have any questions or comments please do not hesitate to contact us. / www.aylmerminorball.com