

MAHTOMEDI YOUTH BASEBALL

Kindergarten/1st Grade Rules

GAME RULES

- This is intended to be an introduction to batting balls in motion and fielding. Keep it light and fun!
- Encourage players to arrive early. Warm-up from 6:00-6:15. Games/practices start promptly at 6:15 pm and end at 7:15 pm.
- Runs are not tracked in the K/1 league. It is up to each team's coaches on whether to enforce outs on their team during games. We encourage teams to do so in the second half of the season.
- Encourage your players to bring what they need to the bench/dugout and spend as much time as possible with their teammates during games/practices instead of joining families during breaks/downtime.
- Very important: the only players with bats in their hands should be the batter and the on-deck hitter. **NO PRACTICE SWINGS IN THE BENCH AREA!**

FIELDING

- 6 infielders (P, C, 1b, 2b, 3b, SS). There are no outfielders at this level.
- Remaining players (non-infielders) should do drills in the outfield grass during their defensive half-inning to keep them involved; if there are only one or two remaining players, they can play outfield positions.
- Catchers must wear full protective gear (helmet/mask, chest protector, shin guards).
- The player in the pitcher position should start behind and to either side of the pitcher/coach.
- Players must receive equal playing time throughout the course of the season (this may not be possible in each individual game). Players must rotate positions every inning and shouldn't play the same infield position more than once a game, if possible.
- The team in the field should have coaches in the field to help direct the fielders, but not to stop or chase down batted or thrown balls for the players.

HITTING

- Each player will get a maximum of **5 pitches** to hit a ball into play. After the 5th pitch, a tee will be brought out so the player can hit a ball into play. Do not go over 5 pitches in order to keep the game moving along.
- No bunting.

- Teams will bat through the entire line-up every inning, regardless of the number of outs recorded. This level is for teaching and giving kids the opportunity to learn the game (running the bases, hitting the ball, fielding the positions).
- Rotate line-ups either every inning or every game so players get to hit in a variety of line-up places and before/after different teammates.
- A coach for the hitting team should pitch overhand to their own team. Coaches are encouraged to pitch from a kneeling position in an effort to keep the pitch as level as possible through the strike zone. For the same reason, do not lob the ball to the hitter. The coach can choose the best place to pitch from, which can vary depending on the batter, but is usually 20-25 feet away from the batter.
- The pitcher/coach is the umpire on the field but can consult with other coaches stationed in the field if necessary.
- All batters and base runners must wear helmets.

BASE RUNNING

- Runners may not leave the base until the ball is hit (no leading off and no stealing).
- A runner may advance only one base on a batted ball to the infield, but may advance up to two bases on a batted ball to the outfield. Coaches can send runners back to the appropriate base if they advance too far.
- Runners may not advance on overthrows (both in-play and out-of-play).
- The last batter in an inning (along with the base runners) may advance as many bases as they can. Teams should announce when the last batter is up so fielders and runners are aware. After the initial play, the defense should throw the ball to the catcher rather than chasing after remaining base runners.
- Force outs, caught balls, tagged runners, and runners not tagging up are outs. Even if coaches choose not to remove a base runner for making an out, these should be acknowledged. It is important that players understand these fundamentals and learn what is an out and what isn't.

DRILLS IN THE OUTFIELD DURING GAMES

- In order to keep players engaged throughout the game and in acknowledgement that there aren't many plays to the outfield at the K/1 level, we encourage coaches to run drills in the outfield grass for the players not in infield positions that inning.
- Some ideas for drills in the outfield:
 - Wiffle ball batting practice (soft toss or off tee)
 - Catching pop-ups
 - Fielding grounders
 - Playing catch

COACH/VOLUNTEER RECOMMENDED ROLES

- Offense:
 - Pitcher
 - 1st/3rd Base Coach
 - Bench coach in dugout
- Defense:
 - 1-2 coaches in the infield directing fielders
 - 1-2 in the outfield leading drills

EXPECTATIONS

- Players, coaches, parents and all other spectators are expected to create a positive environment for all athletes, including those on the opposing team.
- Good sportsmanship, respecting your opponents and encouraging your teammates are musts for all players.
- Umpires/Coaches' decisions are to be respected and accepted. No arguing, no complaining.