



Yorkville Youth Athletic Association Farm/T-Ball League Rules

***New rules as of Fall 2011 are in RED**

General & Administrative

1. **The Field:** The field will be a 55-foot diamond with the center of the **pitcher's circle** (when available) located 45 feet from the back edge of home plate. Each base will be **55-feet apart**, measured from the back of one base to the back of the next. The pitcher's circle will be approximately 12-feet in diameter.
2. **The Umpires:** At least one umpire will be assigned to each game. It is the umpire's job to keep track of strikes, foul balls, and the number of pitches thrown to each batter. It is also the umpire's responsibility to call base runners out or safe, and will keep track of the number of outs. Umpires will have the final say on any call. Umpires will NOT issue warnings regarding bunting, leaving the base early, sliding, or throwing the bat. **It is the coaches' responsibility to remind their players about these rules prior to the game.**
 - a. If the league is unable to provide an umpire, each team will provide one person to serve as an umpire. The fielding team will provide an umpire behind home-plate to track "strikes" and swings, and the hitting team will provide an umpire in the field to call players out or safe, and to keep track of outs.
3. **The Teams:**
 - a. **Minimum players:** Games will be played regardless the number of players on a team; however, if one team has fewer than 8 players the opposing team should send some of their players to play in the field with the shorthanded team.
 - b. **Bat the roster:** During the game, the teams will bat their roster of all the players present at the game, regardless of the number of players each team has. No pinch-hitting is permitted. The batting order may not be altered. **Only (10) ten batters may bat in an offensive half inning.**
4. **The Game:**
 - a. **Time-Limit:** The elapsed time for any game shall not exceed sixty **(60) minutes.**
 - i. If, in the opinion of the umpire(s), at the end of a complete inning there is insufficient time remaining before the expiration of the 60-minute time limit for the teams to play another complete inning, the umpire(s) shall rule that the game is complete.
 - b. **Innings:** No game should exceed six (6) innings.
 - c. **Half-Inning:** A half-inning shall consist of three (3) "outs" or **10 "at-bats"** by the offensive team, whichever occurs first.
 - d. **Final Batter:** When the final batter in the inning comes to bat, the umpire will call "two out, last batter". At that time play will resume and shall be played as any other out, or until the umpire calls time out at the end of the play.

- e. **No Score or Standings:** There will be no official score kept, nor will there be standings kept by the league.

5. Coaching:

- a. **Number of Coaches:** Each team will have at least one coach, and **may not have more than three coaches on the field at a game.**
- b. **On The Field:** While the game is being played the fielding team may have **two coaches in the outfield. The batting team may have base coaches in foul territory at first and third bases.**
- c. **Uniform:** Coaches shall wear a team shirt, and hat during the game to be easily identified.
- d. **Attendance:** Coaches will keep attendance at games and shall report to the YYAA Director any player who misses two or more games.
- e. **Rules Reminder:** Prior to the start of each game, coaches are required to remind and warn their players of the rules and penalties for bunting, leaving the base early, sliding, and throwing the bat.
- f. **Game Responsibility:** Coaches are responsible for fielding a team to all Yorkville Youth Athletic Association scheduled games, regardless of the number of players who will attend. Coaches do not have the authority to cancel any game for any reason. Any disputes with fellow coaches, umpires, directors, rules or Yorkville administration, shall be discussed with parties involved and Yorkville Youth Athletic Association Executive Director at the proper appointed time. The only time a coach may remove a team from the field is in the event of imminent danger.

6. Equipment:

- a. **Batting helmets:** All batters and base runners **MUST** wear a helmet.
- b. **Catching Equipment:** Catchers must wear full equipment, including helmet, mask, throat protector, chest protector, and shin guards.
- c. **Uniforms:** All players must wear sneakers, no baseball or soccer cleats, or turf shoes are allowed. The uniform provided by YYAA, including shirt, hat, and pants, must be worn during all games. The shirt must be tucked into the pants.

Batting

1. At-Bat:

- a. **Three Swings:** Each player gets three swings, or attempts, to hit the ball on the tee.
- b. **Making Contact:** In order for a swing to result in a hit, the batter must make at least partial contact with the ball.
- c. **Contact With Tee Only:** If the batter only hits the tee, the ball be ruled “dead” and the swing will count as a “strike,” no matter where the ball lands.
- d. **Ten-foot Rule:** If a batter makes contact with the ball and the ball does not travel at least (10) ten feet from the batting tee in fair territory, the ball will be ruled a foul ball, and a swing, or “strike.”
- e. **Special Foul Ball Rules:** A batted ball that does not travel beyond the pitcher’s mound, or that bounces near home plate will be ruled, “foul” by the umpire.

2. **Bunting:** A batter may not "bunt" or attempt to "bunt" a ball with the purpose of getting on bas.
3. **Dropping the bat:** The batter, after batting the ball, and before or while running to first base, will drop the bat in a safe and controlled manner in an area on or near home plate or close to the first base line. If a batter does not "drop" the bat in a safe and controlled manner the umpire will immediately stop play and call the batter "out." All base runners will then return to their original bases.
4. **No On-Deck Batters:** There will be no on-deck batters. The only player holding a bat should be the player at the plate.
5. **Helmet:** All batters must wear a batting helmet.

Base Running

1. **No Stealing or Leading:** A base runner will keep one foot on the base until after the ball crosses home plate. Base stealing is not permitted. If a base runner, in order to increase his "lead" to the next base, removes his foot from the base before the pitch crosses home plate, the umpire will call the base runner "out."
2. **No Sliding:** A base runner may not slide into a base for any purpose. If a base runner slides into a base the umpire will immediately call the runner "out."
3. **No Advancing:** Base runners will not advance on pitches missed by the catcher or pitches that go by the catcher.
4. **Dead Ball, No Advance:** Play is stopped and a base runner may not advance to the next base when the umpire determines that the lead base runner is stopped and controlled. The lead base runner will be considered as stopped and controlled and the play over when the umpire determines that the ball, after being hit into fair territory:
 - a. has been returned to a "pitcher-player" inside the pitcher's circle; or
 - b. has been returned to the infield and is in the process of being returned to a "pitcher-player" by a defensive player; or
 - c. has been returned to the infield and the ball is "being held" by a defensive player for the purpose of being returned to the "pitcher-player." (*This rule is to prevent coaches from unfairly taking advantage of young fielders, who may be unaware of all the base runners, by encouraging their base runners to run with abandon, creating panic on the defense, and producing wild throws.*)
5. **Runner Awarded Next Base:** A base runner will be awarded the next base when the umpire determines:
 - a. At the time the lead runner was "stopped and controlled" at a base the base runner was half-way, or beyond, to the runner's next base; or
 - b. At the time when the lead runner was "stopped and controlled," the base runner was forced to the next base; or
 - c. When an overthrow occurs. Only when the overthrown ball touches a side fence, an object, or is touched accidentally or intentionally by any person situated along the sidelines before it is touched or "played" by a defensive player.
6. **Runner Awarded Home:** A base runner who is between third base and home plate is allowed to "score" if the tenth batter of the inning is retired when a fielder, in possession of the ball, steps on any base in the path of the tenth batter (force out),

unless the force out occurs at home plate. If the force out is at home the runner does not “score.”

Fielding

1. **Maximum number of fielders:** There is no maximum number of fielders. All players should play in the field.
2. **Infield**
 - a. **Maximum number of infielders:** No more than six (6) players may be positioned in the infield; including, first base, second base, shortstop, third base, and two “pitchers.”
 - b. **No Catcher:** There is no catcher. A pitcher should cover home on a play at the plate. The ball may not be thrown to the umpire or a coach on a play at the plate. If the ball is thrown to the umpire, he will catch the ball, allow the runner advancing to home to score, and then call the play dead.
 - c. **Infielders’ Positioning:** All infielders must play in “normal fielding positions,” first, second, third base, and shortstop. No infielder or outfielder is permitted to stand on, or directly next to, second base prior to the pitch being thrown. **All infielders, except pitcher and catcher, will remain no more than (5) five-feet in front of the base paths** – until the ball is hit.
 - d. **Infield fly rule:** The infield fly rule does NOT apply in this league.
 - e. **Pitchers:** Two pitchers are allowed to stand no closer than (40) forty-feet from the batting tee until after the batter makes contact with the ball. Both pitchers should remain inside the pitcher’s circle (if available) until the ball is hit.
3. **Outfield**
 - a. **Maximum number of outfielders:** All fielders not in the infield will be positioned in the outfield – there is no maximum.
 - b. **Outfielders’ Positioning:** All defensive players not positioned in the infield will be in the outfield. All outfielders will be in fair territory not less than (6) six-feet behind the bases and base paths between 1st and 3rd base, until after the batter makes contact with the ball. (*Note: The intent and purpose of this rule is to specifically prohibit the use of the "short fielder" who could be used to fill in gaps in the infield or who would cover second base when the second baseman is playing a ball.*)
 - c. **No Short Field/Base Covering:** An outfielder may NOT be used to cover a base. No “short-fielders” are permitted.

Special Ground Rules

1. **Field Boundaries:** A batted ball, which reaches the fence, benches or bleachers in the outfield, is in play. Runners may advance as far as they can and they may be thrown out.
2. **Interference with the ball:**
 - a. When a batted ball is hit beyond the last fielder, and any person, or object, interferes with the flight, or path of the ball in any way, the batted ball will be ruled a home run.

- b. If one of the **fielding team**'s coaches touches or kicks the ball it will result in a dead ball and one extra base for each base runner on the batting team. **For example**, if a player were running from 1st to 2nd base and one of the fielding team's coaches touches the ball that base runner would be awarded 3rd base.
 - c. If a coach from the **batting team** purposely touches a batted ball in fair territory the batter will be out, and all base runners will have to go back to the bases from which they started.
- 3. Interference with a fielder:**
- a. A fly-ball shall be ruled a "dead ball" and "no pitch" when the fielder, who could have fielded the ball on the fly, is interfered with by a non-player, and the interference kept the fielder from making the catch.
 - b. A ground-ball shall be ruled a double, and all runners will advance two bases when an outfielder, who could have fielded the ball, is interfered with by a non-player during his attempt to field the ball.
- 4. Coach/Player Interference:** No coach or player, excluding coaches in the outfield, fielding players, and batter, are allowed on the field while the ball is in play. If any coach or player interferes with the game while the ball is in play, it will result in the following:
- a. **Fielding Team:** If a coach or player from the fielding team interferes with play, the umpire will stop the play, and all base runners on base, including the batter, will get an extra base.
 - b. **Batting Team:** If a coach or player from the batting team interferes with play, the umpire will stop the play, the batter will be out, and all base runners will have to go back to the bases from which they started.
- 5. NO ON DECK BATTER:** The "on-deck" batter may NOT stand outside the dugout, with or without a bat. All players on the batting team, except the current batter, will be in the dugout. The on-deck batter will have their helmet on, standing at the door of the dugout, ready for their at-bat. The on-deck batter should not be swinging a bat.

Expectations and Objectives

The T-Ball League is generally the first introduction to organized baseball for all players. It must be understood that this is a training league. The primary objective is to ensure that each player has had a "positive experience" with baseball, desires to play the following year, and has been taught the fundamentals listed below. Positive reinforcement is critical towards achieving this objective. Coaches should consider the individual needs of each player, and making positive comments as much as possible. Throughout the season, players should be taught the very basics of baseball. By the end of the season players should have learned the following information and skills:

1. The names of the defensive positions
2. How to execute the throw (step with the foot opposite the throwing arm)
3. Effective fielding technique (down and ready, two hands)
4. How to hold the glove in a position to catch the ball
5. How to hold the bat when hitting
6. What to do after the ball is hit, as a batter and runner
7. Why, and when to run to next base (ball hit on the ground versus hit in the air)
8. Where to throw the ball if it is hit in play, understanding who the lead runner is

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