

Simpsonville 1st Grade Baseball Local Rules

1st GRADE DIVISION COACHES PITCH

This 1st grade division is a modified coach's pitch league to help players adjust more easily to the rules and gameplay of the 2nd & 3rd grade leagues. This is a non-competitive league; no scores or standings will be kept. Coaches will officiate games in a constructive and cooperative manner. This league is played in the spirit of Tee-Ball with more of the gameplay and rules of Coaches Pitch.

The time limit should be kept to 1 hour – speed up methods by pitchers and keeping the dugout organized and batters ready to bat will insure time is not wasted and plenty of game play is always present.

The bases shall be 60 feet apart.

Metal cleats shall not be worn.

Casts, jewelry, watches, etc. shall not be worn during the game.

The 1st grade division will use a Level 5 safety ball or approved equivalent, this is a reduced injury factor ball – this ball is close to a regulation baseball which players will use beginning in the 2nd grade division.

All players shall play in the field at one time. 6 Players may play inside the baselines at defensive positions, all others should be at least 10' outside the baselines in outfield positions. Coaches shall insure that defensive players are ready for batters to hit.

A team completes its offensive half of an inning when all members of the team have batted. That team shall be retired even though three outs have not been achieved. No player may bat more than one time per inning.

Each batter will be thrown 5 pitches to hit the ball fairly; foul balls count as a pitch. If a batter fails to put the ball in play in his/her 5 pitches (unless the 5th pitch is fouled or tipped) the next batter will come to bat.

Offensive players, excluding the batter and baserunners, will be kept in the dugout and/or bench area, and for safety reasons only one player at a time should be holding a bat – and that should be the one at the plate batting or heading to the plate. Players should stay in the dugout or bench area until their turn at bat.

There shall be no base on balls. Bunting, leading off base and/or stealing is not allowed. The infield fly rule will not be in effect. **When an out is made the runner should be removed from the base.**

All teams shall have a coach at the game. Three adult base coaches, one coach to assist the batter and one dugout coach is permitted.

Up to 3 Adult coaches are permitted in the field with the defensive team.

Defensive coach's or spectator's interference and offensive obstruction shall be the judgment of the coach if it has occurred and whether the play shall stand or be replayed.

The official score **WILL NOT BE KEPT** for games. **Both teams are winners for playing the game.**

Only one base shall be awarded by the coach to each baserunner and a dead ball declared when the ball is thrown from the field of play in an attempt to make a play at first base. **This is to encourage and teach players to go ahead and try to make the proper play, many times without this in place teams will field a ground ball and simply hold it to call time rather than attempt to make a play and risk the runner at first rounding the bases on an overthrown or misplayed ball. Players cannot learn to make plays without trying to make plays – always encourage your players and players on the other team for attempting to make the correct play – NO MATTER THE OUTCOME – at this level the attempt is what is important.**

Play is stopped and the coach(es) should call time when a player: has the ball in the pitchers circle AND asks for time, a player has the ball ahead of the lead runner and no logical baseball play can be made to advance – dancing between bases trying to draw a throw and/or running on the throw back to the player or adult pitcher should be strongly discouraged as this is not part of the true game of baseball and is ONLY an attempt to score cheap runs(which do not count any way). If ever in doubt think about a high school, college or pro game – if the runner in one of those would not normally advance in a "real" game given the situation, don't allow them to here – remember you are teaching them to play baseball – not 1st grade coaches pitch.

If a team does not have enough players to adequately play the game, the opposing team should allow any "extra" players to round out the teams. **THE GAMES SHOULD BE PLAYED IF POSSIBLE.**

The adult pitcher must be a minimum of 20 feet from home plate. Kneeling is allowed.

THROW DARTS – rainbow pitches create bad swing habits – teach your players to hit line drives – if they get in the habit of trying to hit the ball in the air it will hinder them in the future. Keep your pitches level and between the belt and knees to help train better hitters down the road.