

COACH PITCH DIVISION RULES

Coach Pitch Purpose

Coach Pitch is an instructional program designed to provide a foundation and introduction to baseball that focuses on fundamentals, taking the next step from the Tee Ball experience, and having fun. Setting the foundation at an early age allows players to develop the skills used at every level, as they progress through baseball. It is the 2nd step of the program that should flow from one season to the next, as live hitting is introduced until player pitch begins.

Coach Pitch Skill Objectives

Upon completion of Coach Pitch, a player should have been instructed in the following areas and had opportunities to demonstrate the ability to perform these fundamental baseball skills:

Hitting: feet and bat in position to allow bat to contact baseball. Start to introduce the terms load and stride.

Running: know which base to run to and when to run

Throwing: steps to grip and throw a baseball

Fielding and catching: steps to field and catch a baseball

Game Dynamics: Begin to have an understanding of what an “out” is, when they are “out” and the different ways to make an “out”. Understand what a “run” is, when a “run” is scored, and how to make a “run”. Begin to have an understanding of the different fielding positions on the field.

Coach Pitch Overview

Coach Pitch often consists of players with different skill levels. Some players will be fearless, while others will be more timid and potentially afraid of the ball. The objective does not change. The skills need to be developed and the players need to begin accepting instruction and coaching.

Player Eligibility

Coaches Pitch players are baseball age 5 or 6, with one year of Tee Ball.

Players of any other age are taken on a case-by-case basis and must approved by Leo-Grabill Baseball Board.

General League Rules

- 1) No scores will be kept for games—officially or unofficially.
- 2) No official standings will be recorded for any regular season games.
- 3) There will be no league tournament for Coach Pitch Division.
- 4) Players should expect to have no more than 2 weekly commitments—1 game on Saturday morning, and 1 practice on a weekday evening at the Coach's discretion. In the event of rainouts, or additional games needed, games may occur on a weekday evening. In these cases, Coach's should use discretion in planning practice to not overload the Player's schedule as outlined above.

Game Rules

- 1) Any player playing the pitcher position should wear a batting helmet.
- 2) No fielding player should stand closer to the batter than the pitcher.
- 3) 1 hour 15 minutes is allotted for Coach Pitch.
 - a. 3 full innings should be targeted for each game (a full inning shall consist of both team's batting and fielding per inning).
 - b. No inning shall be started after 60 minutes have elapsed since game start.

Game Specific Rules (1st Half of Season, Approx. 5 Games)

Batting

- 1) Coach will pitch to batter.
 - a. Underhand or overhand is at the coach's discretion, depending on if player is ready for overhand. If overhand pitching is utilized, attempt to pitch from the player's eye level by pitching from one knee or sitting on a bucket.
 - b. Coaches may pitch "soft-toss" style from side of home plate.
 - c. Coaches will pitch to their team during the games.
- 2) Coach shall bring 5 to 6 baseballs to mound for each batter. If all baseballs are pitched without contact from batter, ball should be placed on tee. No strikeouts. No walks. Entire roster bats through line-up each inning. The half inning is over after the last batter hits.
- 3) Last batter – all base runners run all the way to home, including last batter.

Base Running and Outs

- 1) Outs are called, but not limited to 3 outs.
- 2) Player stays on base regardless of "out" or "safe".
- 3) Players attempt to field and throw to bases for outs.
- 4) Player may advance only one base at a time.

Coaches/Parent Helpers (Recommended)

Batting:

- 1) One coach to pitch to batters.
- 2) Two base coaches to help base runners (one coach near 1st base, one near 3rd based)
- 3) One to manage the bench/batting order.

Fielding:

- 1) Distribute coaches around infield to help with fielding. Remind/instruct players on where to throw the ball before each batter. Instruct fielders to always be in “Ready Position” prior to pitch.
- 2) All players shall play the field each inning, regardless of number of players. Fielding positions (i.e. first base, shortstop, left field) should be taught generally, but do not need to be followed exactly for fielding based on number of players.
- 3) Encourage players to allow the correctly positioned fielder to field the ball hit to them first before all running to the ball.
- 4) Fielders should throw the ball to a base (likely first base) on EACH batted ball.
- 5) Rotate defensive positions each inning—players should play a new position each inning.

Focus of first half of the season should be less about making outs and getting extra base hits and more on fundamentals and what to do at bat, base running, and fielding.

Game Specific Rules (2nd Half of Season)

Batting

- 1) Coach will pitch to batter.
 - a) Coaches will preferably be pitching overhand from in front of the batter by Game 5.
 - b) Coaches will pitch to their team during the games.
 - c) Coach shall bring 5 to 6 baseballs to mound for each batter. If all baseballs are pitched without contact from batter, ball should be placed on tee. No strikeouts. No walks.

Base Running and Outs

- 1) Outs will be called and counted.
- 2) Players leave base if they are “out”.
- 3) After 3 outs, clear the bases, but continue to bat through full batting lineup.
- 4) Encourage batters to consider running to 2nd base on balls hit to outfield. Only 1 additional base should be run for overthrows.

Coaches/Parent Helpers (Recommended)

Batting:

- 1) One coach to pitch
- 2) Two base coaches to help base runners (one at 1st base and one at 3rd base) 1st and 3rd base coaches shall be responsible for calling outs for their base runners.
- 3) One to manage the bench/batting order.

Fielding:

- 1) Continue helping with fielding and instruct players on where to throw the ball.
- 2) Encourage fielders to seek “outs” by throwing to the correct base or tagging baserunners with the ball.

- 3) All players shall play the field each inning, regardless of number of players. Fielding positions (i.e. first base, shortstop, left field) should be taught generally, but do not need to be followed exactly for fielding based on number of players.
- 4) Rotate defensive positions each inning—players should play a new position each inning.

Focus for second half of the season should begin to shift toward how outs are made and encouraging players to seek outs. Batting and base running should start to focus toward scoring runs and trying to not get out while running the bases.

For the final (2) games of the season, if both coaches/teams agree prior to the game, batter could be limited to (3) strikes per at bat, and half innings could be limited to (3) outs per inning. If these rules are adopted, more than (3) innings may be played if time allows. Coach judgement is allowed is determining if these rules are adopted based on players' readiness and understanding of concepts. These rules can be adopted on a game-by-game, team-by-team basis and need not be adopted by the full league.