



## Coach Pitch Playing Guidelines (Spring 2026)

**\*\*\*Only coaches on the field can make calls. If a play is close, opposing coaches will conference, make a call and move on. This age group requires so much instruction, please be supportive of all involved.\*\*\***

1. Safety first! (please keep bats away from all players until it's time for one to bat)
2. Chat it up, focus on having fun, celebrate good plays and at bats – teach!
3. Start practices and games on time (players can join as they arrive)
4. Standings will be kept during Spring baseball. An official line-up will be given to the scorekeeper, listing all eligible players. All eligible players must bat and the batting order must remain the same for that entire game. Any player arriving late shall be added to the batting order in the last position. Any player who is unable to continue play can be removed from the game without penalty to his/her team. If physically able, the player is entitled to re-enter the game in the same position in the batting order.
5. Free substitution will be in effect for all fall season games. Any player may be removed and reenter the game at any time.
6. Only league provided baseballs may be used during games.
7. Players will bat off coach pitched balls from around 40-feet (same distance as machine).
8. When at bat, the offensive team may position two adult coaches on the field of play. One coach shall occupy the third base coach's box and the other shall occupy the first base coach's box. A coach may occupy the backstop area to speed up play.
9. The coach-pitcher must jog off the field once the ball is put in play and may not coach the batter or base runner until the play is over. Base runners are encouraged to take direction from the first and third base coaches.
10. The defensive team is allowed up to three coaches on the field (outfield area is best).
11. Players must play defensively in the 10 normal defensive positions and are not allowed to roam the field (1 extra player may fill outfield gaps). A player is not allowed to take a play away from another player who is playing a normal position. If this occurs, the coaches should stop play to explain why players are to include other players and the base runner will be called safe. For example, the first baseman can't run across to third base to tag a runner.
12. No player may play the same defensive position more than two innings in a game (exceptions - catchers may play three innings if only 1 is willing and available or if safety is a potential concern for an inexperienced player).



13. If a defensive team has 8 or fewer players and elects to play without a catcher, another player on the team (infielder, pitcher or outfielder) cannot make a play at home plate. Offensive runners attempting to score will be called safe at home if any defensive player attempts to make a play at home (there can be no put-outs at home since there is no official catcher). Teams with nine (9) or more players must attempt to field a catcher.
14. Regular season games end after 4 complete innings (win – loss – tie). Do not start a new inning after 1 hour 10 minutes. Should time pass the 1 hour 10 minutes, the Home team may finish if losing and down by no more than 5 runs.
15. Tight bases will be enforced (No leading off). Runners may advance only on a hit ball.
16. Innings will end with 3 outs or the scoring of 5 runs in that inning.
17. Hitters will receive only 5 pitches. Regardless of number of strikes, if the hitter has not put the ball in play in 5 pitches, he or she will be called out. As an exception, if the final pitch is fouled, the player will receive an additional pitch(es) until the ball is put in play fairly or the player misses or does not swing at the pitch.
18. Inexperienced Hitters will be given opportunities to put the ball in play during the season. These opportunities will take place at the conclusion of some games as determined by coaches and league leadership. Players will be monitored for this need.
19. If a batted ball hits the pitcher coach, the ball is dead, the pitch counts and runners cannot advance. The batter will return to the batter's box to continue the at bat.
20. If a pitcher coach interferes with a defensive player's ability to field a batted ball, the ball is dead and runners cannot advance. The batter will return to the batter's box to continue the at bat.
21. The play is ceased when, in the coach's judgment, the ball is in an infielder's possession in the infield. The infielder does not have to hold the ball up to stop play. The coaches, based on the position of the runners at the time of the infielder's possession will direct base runners to the appropriate bases. Base runners that are more than half way to the base they are running towards will be awarded that base. Base runners that are less than half way to the base they are running towards will be awarded the base they last occupied. If a play is made in the infield to stop an advancing runner and the play is unsuccessful (e.g. the ball is overthrown), then the runner (as well as all other runners on base) can only advance one additional base (one base on an overthrow). Similarly, if the infielder is attempting to stop an advancing runner and the play is unsuccessful but there is no overthrow, all other runners can only advance one base from the base occupied prior to the start of the play (for example, a runner on second cannot advance to home while the infielder is attempting to throw a runner out at first unless there is an overthrow). The play is ceased when the base runners stop advancing as in regular baseball rules.[Big Field: Ball must make it to infielder possession within a reasonable distance matching the infield dirt on the little field]



22. During spring season league play, any team with as few as 8 players may start a game without a forfeit (7 players or fewer = Forfeit).
23. When a runner encounters a play at a base that, in the judgment of the coaches, would cause potential contact with a defensive player, the runner must "give up, get down or get out of the way". The runner must either avoid the potential tag by running out of the baseline (thus retired), stopping in the baseline to allow the tag or sliding into the base. Failure to avoid contact in this manner will be deemed to constitute excessive force and that player will be out and ejected from the game at the discretion of the coaches.
24. No infield fly rule or balk rule will be in effect.
25. Bunting is not allowed (short distance hits are okay).
26. Coaches may call games due to inclement weather.
27. Rained out games may be rescheduled in the order in which they were rained out by the league scheduler at the earliest available time. The scheduler shall notify both involved managers when he/she determines the date and time of the game.
28. Coaches are allowed on the field to help defensive players.
29. Entire roster should constitute the batting order.
30. Once ball is judged dead by coaches the play is stopped.
31. Teams will line up and say "good game" following games to display sportsmanship.
32. Award one game ball per team after each game (all players should earn a game ball).
33. **Have fun!**

*Spring baseball should be a fun learning experience for coaches, parents and players.*

*Questions? Contact Matt Dunn at 910-431-6674*