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**2026 YOUTH BASEBALL**  
**First Grade**  
**Coach Pitch**

**I. PURPOSE**

First Grade baseball was organized to enable all players to learn the fundamentals of baseball, and the basics of each position. It is at this grade level that youth should learn team play and good sportsmanship. The coach should set a good example and will refrain from arguing what may be a close play.

- A. No Protests allowed in this league.
- B. There will be no trophies given or standings or scores kept to de-emphasize winning and promote teaching at this level.

**II. PLAYING FIELD DIMENSIONS**

- A. The pitching mound is 46' from home plate and baselines will vary between 60' and 65', depending on the diamond.
- B. Adults or players may coach at first and third base. Only one (1) coach will be allowed in the coaches box at a time. **Players or minors coaching a base must wear a batting helmet.**

**III. PLAYING RULES**

- A. It is not within the power of the umpire or coaches to suspend any of the rules.
- B. Players completing First Grade must play in the 1<sup>st</sup> grade League (1<sup>st</sup> year coach pitch).
- C. Rosters shall be a maximum of 15 youths.
- D. All players will play in the field at one time.
  - a. All infield positions should be manned. Infield positions will consist of (1<sup>st</sup> base, 2<sup>nd</sup> base, 3<sup>rd</sup> base, Shortstop, and Pitcher ). Infielders must play near their normal positions on the infield.
  - b. "ALL" other players will be outfielders and must be on the grass. Outfielders must be near their normal playing positions and evenly spaced throughout the outfield. Outfielders will not play "short outfield". If an outfield arc is present, all outfielders must remain behind the arc until the ball is hit by the batter.
  - c. Each player "must" play a minimum of two (2) complete innings (6 outs) in the infield.
  - d. Coaches must rotate their players at least every two innings.

- E. No fake tags will be allowed in any league.
- F. No more than six (6) innings will be played.
- G. *There will be a **drop dead time limit of 1 hour**.*

#### IV. **BATTING**

- A. A runner, not more than halfway to the next base, must return to the last touched base when the ball becomes dead on the infield.
- A. Intentional bunting or stealing bases is not allowed.
- B. Infield fly rule shall not apply and will not be called in the First Grade League.
- D. When a batted ball hits the adult pitcher, it is a dead ball and the batter will be awarded 1st base and all other runners will be awarded one base..
- E. For all innings, five runs or three outs— the half inning is over.
- F. A runner shall be called out for leading off before a pitched ball crosses home plate. A runner may score on a batted ball in play.
- G. In an effort to promote the development of throwing and catching skills, runners will “not” be allowed to advance on overthrows.
- I. A runner shall attempt to slide FEET FIRST on all close plays. Failure to slide “may” result in the runner being called out.
- J. Teams must bat their entire roster.
- H. No walks or strikeouts allowed. **If the ball is not put in play after 5 pitches**, a hitting tee **MUST** be brought out and used by the batter. Players should be encouraged to be ready to swing.
- I. Players may take second base (and other runners may advance two bases) on line drives and fly balls to the outfield. The ball must land on the grass without touching infield. Ground balls that reach the outfield, or balls misplayed by outfielders, will be treated as singles only. This rule is specifically designed to reward solid hits into the gaps

#### V. **DEFENSE**

- A. A ball hit to the outfield becomes dead when it is **controlled** on the infield *by any player*. A ball hit on the infield becomes dead after a play is made on any runner. *The exception to this is in the case of a double play - the fielding team is allowed to “finish the play” of the double play (i.e. if there is 1 out with a runner on 1B and ball is hit to SS, the SS or 2B can attempt to make a force out at 2B and continue to try for an out at 1B without the play being called dead).*
- B. A thrown ball that hits the adult pitcher is a dead ball and runners may not advance

- C. Infield fly rule shall not apply and will not be called in the First Grade League.
- D. The defensive pitcher on the fielding team shall play beside, but not in front of the adult pitcher, and will return the ball to the adult pitcher. The pitcher must begin each play within three (3) feet of the pitching mound.

## ADULT PITCHERS

- A. All pitchers must be 18 years of age or older.

Coaches can pitch overhand or underhand depending on the batters hitting ability. Coaches can pitch from the mound (46 feet) or choose to pitch from a closer distance based on that batters hitting ability. The pitcher should not pitch any closer than 38 feet.

Each player will be given five (5) pitches to put the ball in play. **After five pitches a tee must be brought out and the batter will finish the at bat using the tee.** A player cannot strike out or walk.

- B. Teams should place a defensive player to the left or right of the adult pitcher if on the mound. Defensive pitchers must be within **three (3) feet of the mound** at the time the ball is pitched regardless of where the ball is pitched from.

## EQUIPMENT

- A. All bats must have the USA Baseball stamp.
- B. Tennis shoes or rubber/molded cleats may be worn.
- C. Pants are not required but are recommended. If worn, they must be gray