



North Central Little League

Rules of play for NCLL T-ball

Preface: This document will serve as an effort to document some guidelines on conducting games at the T-ball level of play for the 2009 season. Please keep in that mind we are a development league and our primary goal is to prepare our players to move up the Little League ladder and eventually play in the Majors.

The goal is to make it a “set of guidelines” by the end of our season, and establish how T-ball baseball is played in NCLL for future seasons.

The following “Rules” are intended to serve as guidance for T-Ball Coaches. Adjustments to these “Rules” can be made by mutual agreement between Coaches prior to beginning a game

1. Pitching:

- a. Pitching: There is no pitching in T-ball.
- b. Catching: Catching is provided from the defensive team. A youth catcher’s glove not provided in T-ball.

2. Hitting:

- a. Balls and Strikes: The player continues to swing the bat until the ball is put in play.
- b. Walks: There are no walks in T-ball.
- c. Strikeouts: There are no strikeouts in T-ball.
- d. Who bats: Teams will bat six players per half-inning. The sixth batter will “clear the bases” by running from home plate, to home plate. Fielders will wait until the last base runner crosses home plate before clearing the field.
- e. Outs: There are no outs recorded in T-ball. Hitters and/or base runner who are “put out” by the defensive team are to remain on base. Fielders making the out should be acknowledged for their good defensive play.
- f. Throwing of bats: If a player throws the bat following an at bat, that player is given one warning. If a player throws the bat again following the warning, that player is removed from the game for safety precautions. The warning and removal are at the discretion of the Managers.

3. Base Running:

- a. Single or more: During the first half of the season, hitters will only advance to first base. During the second half of the season, based on mutual agreement between Coaches, hitters with a superb hit to the outfield will be allowed to take an extra base.

- b. Advancing on an error: Errors are not recognized in T-ball, there is no advancing on an error.
- c. Base coaches: Again, in the spirit of player development, you should always have a 1st and 3rd base coach. This is an excellent job for that Mom or Dad in the stands. If they have not participated in practices, you will need to teach them how to instruct the players.
- d. Stealing / leading off: there is **no** stealing or leading off in T-ball.

4. **Fielding:**

- a. How many players in the field: Teams are welcome to place as many players in the field as they would like to play. In order not to crowd the infield with too many players, however, Coaches should field the traditional infield positions, plus one additional infield player (usually at second base).
- b. Infield positions: 6 or 7 players, coaches discretion.
- c. Outfield positions: as many positions as needed, coaches discretion.
- d. Encroachment: While there is not a specific rule regarding encroachment, try to avoid this type of play. Even your players who need the most development still need the opportunity to make a play.
- e. Player Rotations: you should attempt to play all team members an equal number of innings in the outfield and infield during the season. There is no position specialization in T-ball.

5. **Umpire** There are no umpires in T-ball.

6. **Other considerations:**

- a. Ball we us: we use an Official RIF5 safety ball, a squishy ball
- b. Bats we use: bats must be 2 ¼ inch barrel, Little League approved
 - i. Where to keep the bats: During a game, keep bats under your control. There is no warm up circle in Little League, so your on-deck batter needs to be in the dugout. Keep the bats on the fence OUTSIDE the dugout.
- c. What do my bench players do: organized the dugout during warm-ups and they are your cheerleaders. Know and teach some baseball chants to your players.
- d. Inning run rule: There is no inning run rule in T-ball. All players who bat will score.
- e. Time limit / Inning limit: our games have a time limit of 60 minutes or 3-innings which ever come first. Teams will agree on a mutual number of minutes for warm ups. The visiting team will warm up first. The home team will warm up second and stay on the field to begin the game. Coaches are free to wave their warm up time to provide more game time.
- f. Post Game: Teams will pack up and clear out of the “dugout” area upon completion of their game. Post-game team meetings and conversations are to take place off the field and away from the “dugout” area. Be considerate of the next teams that are preparing to play their game. Please do not lingering in the “dugout” area.

- g. Dugout assignment: For all games in NCLL, the home team will take the 3rd base dugout and the visiting team will take the 1st base dugout.

7. Equipment checks:

- a. Gloves: gloves for this level of player will be between 9-11 inches. Take a look at your players gloves, make sure their names and phone numbers are on them. Advise the players parent if they are playing with equipment that is not appropriate. While specialty gloves (1st base, catcher, etc.) can be used at this level, try to discourage this. Most of these gloves are too large for players at Coach Pitch.
- b. Bats: Bats should be between 24-25 inches and between 11-16 oz (this is just a rule of thumb). A batter should be able to hold the bat with only their left hand (if right handed batter) and move it slowly across their body on a level plain without dipping. Be on the lookout for bats the player picked because it was cool or the red one, but are completely too big for them. You may not be able to convince the player to use another bat, but limit the use of that large bat to just the owner.
- c. Helmets: Check for cracks or missing pads. There has been some concern in the past regarding lice. If a player has those concerns, they can purchase their own helmet. Again, the manager/coach is the final authority on anything safety related, so any “player owned” equipment must meet your satisfaction.
- d. Catchers Gear: Your equipment bags will have a complete set of catchers gear. Some players will love to catch, others will like to avoid it, try not to find that player who wants nothing to do with catching as you ask him to gear up in the 1st game. I've always tried to encourage Mom or Dad to get their player ready to catch while we're up to bat. On the safety side, all catchers' masks must have a “dangler” attached to be used in a LL game. If you are missing one, ask for a replacement or share the helmet with the dangler between teams until yours can be fixed.

Final thoughts: While we are a non-competitive division in Little League, with no score keeping, it's inherent to sports that there will be individual and team successes and failures. At all times in the game, find the good in each play. The ball that sails over the 1st baseman's head is still a “strong throw” from the player. Every strikeout has at least some number of “good cuts” in it. Be your team's advocate and head cheerleader.

Parents are welcome to participate in practices and game days at the T-ball level. However, anyone participating with the players on a regular basis is required to complete a background check and be cleared by NCLL to participate. If needed, invite your parents to participate in the activity, these willing parents are our future coaches.

Have a great season