



NPYL Instructional Division Rules

OBJECTIVE

Introduce the fundamentals of baseball/softball to four to six-year-old boys and girls. Emphasis will be on sportsmanship, team concepts, and fair play.

DIVISION GOALS

1. Provide a great and safe experience for all involved.
2. Teach key fundamentals and rules about the game.
3. Players are excited to come each day and continue to play the sport.

PARTICIPATION RULES

1. The division is designed for four (4) to six (6) year olds. Exceptions must be approved by the Division Director. At the coach's discretion, a parent/guardian may be required to be on the field with the player. Playing ages are defined as follows:
 - a) Baseball: Any boy four (4) years old on May 1st of the current year and not older than six (6) on May 1st of the current year.
 - b) Softball: Any girl four (4) years old on or before January 1st of current year and not older than six (6), before January 1st of the current year.
2. The Division Director will assign each child to a team dividing evenly those children with previous experience and those children with non-experience.
 - a) Siblings will be put on the same team, unless otherwise requested by their parents.
 - b) No accommodations of any other kind are guaranteed. Other accommodations are at the Division Director's discretion by request only.

GAME PRELIMINARIES

3. Home teams prepare the field for play, such as lining the diamond. Home team will be in the third base dugout. The visiting team is responsible for raking the field after play.
4. Coaches are required to provide at least three (3) game balls while their respective team is hitting.
 - a) Both coached are expected to award game balls at the end of each game to a player(s) on their respective team to provide all players on the roster one (1) game ball in total for the entire season.

GAMEPLAY

5. The Time Limit for each game is sixty (60) minutes with a minimum of four (4) innings.
 - a) The inning begins when the last out occurs or the last batter reaches base in the previous inning.

- b) No new inning will start after the time limit.
- 6. A Coach of the team at bat will do all pitching.
 - a) The Coaches will be allowed to pitch any distance from home plate as needed to allow each batter equal chance to hit the ball. We want the child to be given every chance to learn proper hitting fundamentals.
 - b) Boys are encouraged to be pitched to overhand and girls are encouraged to be pitched to underhand.
 - c) For shorter boy players, Coaches are encouraged to pitch from a knee to lessen the effect of the height difference
- 7. Each batter will be allowed six (6) pitches to hit the ball. If batter has not hit the ball fair at the end of six (6) pitches, it shall be placed on the "tee" for the batter to hit. If the batter fowls off the final pitch, an optional pitch may be given at the coach's discretion.
 - a) There are NO walks allowed.
- 8. A team's offensive half shall be terminated when the offensive team bats half of their players.
 - a) If a team has an odd number of players, they will bat an odd number one inning, then even the next, and so on (i.e., 9 players...5 will hit in the 1st inning, 4 in the 2nd inning, then repeat as time allows).
 - b) No player will bat in consecutive innings to accommodate for one team having fewer players than the other. The last batter should be announced to the defensive team as a courtesy.
 - c) The last batter is not a free-for-all, or 'home run.' The intent is to play the batted ball as if there are two (2) outs in the inning. Runners should not be cut loose to run until tagged at the plate, as this does not promote proper base-running fundamentals.
- 9. Outs or runs scored are not recorded throughout the inning. Outs are enforced. Players are sent to the dugout in the event of any out. (Although the inning does not end with three outs.)
- 10. All runners are limited to one base on overthrows to first base at their own risk, even if additional plays are made by the defense.
- 11. Play will stop when the lead runner is stopped or the defensive team returns the ball within the area around the pitcher's mound, approximately a twenty (20) foot circle. The ball does not have to be caught cleanly but must touch the pitcher's helper inside the circle. Play will stop when the pitcher's helper touches or is touched by the ball while in the area around the pitcher's mound.
 - a) Players are not permitted to call 'time' to stop play or raise hands as if signaling 'time'.
- 12. If a player, in the coach's opinion, is more than halfway between two bases at the time play is stopped, the player will be awarded the next base.
 - a) Excessive advancement of runners will not be permitted. If sending a runner at a higher level of play would typically result in the runner being put out, then the runner should not be sent. Again, our intent is to promote proper base running fundamentals.
- 13. All offensive players be in the dugout and are encouraged to be seated on the bench.
- 14. All players on the official team roster will assume a position on the field during the defensive half of the inning. The infield will consist of six (5) players (P, 1B, 2B, SS, & 3B). All infielders must not be positioned in the baseline. The outfield will contain the remaining players and must be stationed in or at the edge of the outfield grass.
 - a) No catcher's position. Coach of the batting team will retrieve pitched balls.

EQUIPMENT

- 15. Pitchers Helper must wear a face mask (or helmet with face mask) and heart protection. a. Facemasks for infielders are not required but may be worn.
- 16. Helmets must be worn until the player reaches the dugout.
- 17. Balls will be safety/soft/squishy/T-ball type for practices and games.
 - a) Baseball: 9-inch class with soft center

- b) Softball: 11-inch class with soft center
18. Bats are recommended to be T-ball bats.

Note: The League provides the following equipment for each team at the beginning of the season for the head coach.

- *Box of game balls*
- *Hitting tee*
- *Heart guard*
- *Face mask for pitcher's helper*