



St. Bonaventure Baseball League

T-Ball Rules - 2011



Summary of Rules:

- Regulation game is 6 innings, game is official after 3 innings
- During regular season innings end after all batters come to bat
- JK/SK players have 4 swings before they are called out (can still run the bases), all other players are permitted 3 swings
- Up to 12 players can play in the field (maximum 7 infielders)
- Players cannot play same position in more than 1 inning and cannot be pitcher for more than one inning
- No lead-offs and no stealing bases

Game Length/Weather

Regulation Games are 6 innings. A game becomes official after 3 innings. Games start at 6:30 PM sharp. Teams shall play until darkness or conditions render playing impractical at the discretion of the umpire. If an inning cannot be completed the score reverts back to the score at the end of the prior inning.

In regular season the coaches and umpire must agree on which inning is the final inning before the inning starts and both teams must get a chance at bat to complete the inning.

At the beginning of the game the coaches shall determine after what time no new inning shall begin with the default time being 8:00 PM in case no agreement is made. (Later times apply mostly for games later in the season when days are longer.)

In the Field:

Each team has up to 12 players and they all need to be positioned on the field. The infield has only seven positions: pitcher, catcher, 1st base, 2nd base, shortstop, 3rd base and rover. The rover should be positioned as an extra short stop between 1st base and 2nd base. The remainder of the team should be placed in outfield positions on the grass. Infield players can not stand on baseline or block runners. They also can not encroach upon the batter or pitching area. Umpire can ask players to move back if they are too close.

A team requires a minimum of 7 players, otherwise they forfeit the game and an exhibition game may be played.

A player is not permitted to play more than one inning in the same position. The same player may not be the pitcher for more than one inning.

All players must be in their positions before the ball is struck. All players must be set prior to the ball being hit and **remain in the same position for the entire inning.**

The pitcher must start the play behind or on the pitcher's rubber. The pitcher cannot move out of the pitcher's area until the ball is struck and cannot encroach towards home plate.

The pitcher is not permitted to run to 1st base for an out or tag the runner out. A toss must be made to the 1st baseman no matter how close. Underhand throws are allowed. Runners advancing to other bases or home may be tagged or forced out by the pitcher without a throw with the exception that a force out at home plate (i.e. when the bases are loaded) can only be made by the catcher gaining control of the ball in the Dead Ball area. **This means that the pitcher or other fielder cannot run the ball home and make a force out – a throw must be made in the same manner as at first base.**

Players may not block the base paths or stand on the bases. If a fielder impedes a runner's progress, the runner will be granted the base he/she is going to. This is especially true at 1st base. Coaches can not place rover and short stop positions close to or adjacent the pitcher. They must remain back by or behind the baseline.

The 1st baseman should begin the play slightly away from the base. When the ball is hit, he/she should move to the base and put one foot on the white part of the **“Safe-T Base”**. If the 1st baseman catches the ball on the orange side of the “Safe-T Base” or blocks the runner's path to the orange side, the runner is safe. The runner is not out for touching the white part of the base unless it interferes with the 1st baseman playing the ball.

Ball in Play – When Does the Play Stop?

There are two ways that the play may come to an end:

1. **Ball in the “Dead Ball Area”:** When the ball crosses into the area past a line which extends from the plate/tee to the backstop (the **“Dead Ball Area”**) the play stops instantly even if the ball subsequently bounces out of the Dead Ball Area; and
2. **Runners Stop Advancing & Time-Out Called:** When a fielder has control of the ball in the infield and the runners have advanced to a base and are no longer running, a player, coach or umpire may call Time-Out and the ball may be thrown home with no further advancement allowed.

After a play, players should be taught to throw the ball home. The catcher should be taught to catch/pick-up and control the ball, but the play is dead whether they do so or not – except in the case of the seventh batter (see below).

Home Plate – When is a Runner Safe or Out?

Once a runner has advanced more than half way to home plate from 3rd base, they have committed and cannot turn back.

To avoid collisions at home plate, the runner must cross a line to the right of home plate that extends from the corner of home plate to the backstop screen (the **“Safe Line”**). The Safe Line shall be drawn so that the runner has actually passed home plate to ensure the runner travels the same distance as they would have had to in order to touch home plate under normal circumstances. A player is not out if they touch home plate unless they interfere with the catcher picking up the ball in so doing.

To record an out, the catcher must have control of the ball in the Dead Ball Area prior to the runner crossing the line (the **“Out Area”**). It is not required that the player have a foot on the tee.

Normal rules apply at all other bases and tags or force outs must be applied when required.

Overthrow Rule

If the ball is overthrown at first base, third base, or home plate, and the ball ends up out of the field of play then the play is dead and all runners advance one base only. (“Out of the field play” is an umpire's judgment call but in general means that the ball is well beyond a fielder's reach and not still within the foul lines of the field or within the backstop area around home plate.)

If the ball is overthrown and does not go out of the field of play the runner may advance at his/her own risk until the play is over (as explained above).

Overthrow to 1st Base

St Bonaventure T-Ball is considered to be a teaching division. In keeping with the spirit of this, coaches should encourage their players to throw the ball to 1st and attempt to make a play. Players should not be encouraged to end the play and not attempt to throw to 1st base for fear that runners will get an extra base. Umpires will not penalize teams that encourage and teach their players to throw to 1st base. Advancement on overthrows at 1st base is at the umpire's discretion.

Batting:

Regular Season T Ball Rules - ALL-KIDS-BAT

During the regular season all players in the lineup will bat each inning regardless of how many players each team has.

In order to keep score equity we will only count runs to the extent that each team have the same number of players at the game but we will not adjust below 9 players. So if one team has 10 and another has 11 it would not be fair to count runs driven in from the 11th batter. In this case the 11th batter would still hit and all players would run but the runs would not count. HOWEVER, if one team has less than 9 players the other team should be able to count up to 9 so teams are not penalized for having a full complement.

- a) The leadoff batter for every inning should change – so for the Second Inning the first batter would be the second kid in the lineup and so on for following innings so you do not have the same last batter every inning.
- b) Coaches must have kids ready to go in the batting lineup so as not to waste time.
- c) Teams can shorten number of batters for last inning if it is getting late (e.g. both teams can agree in advance of the inning to bat a specific number of batters).

Playoff T Ball Batting Rules – ONLY SEVEN BATTERS EACH INNING

Seven batters shall come to the plate in each inning for each team and the inning shall continue, regardless of how many outs are recorded, until all seven batters have had their at-bats. Players who are retired at the plate or on the bases shall return to their team's dugout and do not continue running the bases.

The batting team must announce the **seventh** batter to the fielding team and umpire.

For the seventh batter of the inning the fielding team can end the inning by either retiring the batter and all of the runners that are on base (through force outs or by being tagged out) or by placing the ball on the tee.

Any runners who are not made out and who cross the Safe Line prior to the ball being placed on the tee will record a run. The seventh batter can score only if he/she does not make an out on the bases and reaches home plate before the opposing team places the ball on the tee.

Bases Loaded for Seventh Batter

If the bases are loaded for the 7th batter an out may be recorded if a player gets control of the ball in the Dead Ball Area prior to the runner at third crossing the Safe Line – even if the ball is not yet placed on the tee. For subsequent batters to be retired they must be tagged out or the ball must be placed on the tee to end the inning.

All players should be taught to keep running until the ball is placed on the tee when the seventh batter is up.

Striking Out:

First year players (JK & SK) are allowed 4 swings before they are called out. If a child has taken more than 4 swings the **umpire** can send the child to first base as if they “walked” or may physically assist the child in hitting the ball to expedite the process.

Junior and Senior Kindergarten players will have the opportunity to run the bases even if they strike out or get out at first base. If a JK or SK strikes out or makes out at first base they can remain on base to participate in the play. The idea is to allow them to run the bases as much as possible and learn the concept of advancing on the bases but the exception applies only at first base unless both coaches agree otherwise (to let a younger child continue to run).

Any runs scored by JKs or SKs who have been put out but remain on base to run will not be counted and they should be marked as “outs” by the two coaches scoring the game.

All other players are permitted 3 swings. Umpires may exercise discretion and grant additional strikes to a player with the consent of both coaches.

Fair Ball Line:

All hits must cross the “**Fair Ball Line**”. This line is a drawn or imaginary (umpires discretion) semi circle line ten feet in front of home plate.

Batting:

Batters who throw their bat are given one warning and then are called out if they throw it again. The warning is given after the first occurrence.

Batters can set their feet to place the ball in a particular spot but they cannot move their feet radically to place the ball during their swing. Players will be warned once then called out.

If a player has to leave the game (to go to the washroom) and misses his/her turn at bat, the next player in the order fills in. When the player returns he/she must wait for their next turn.

Base Running:

Base Runners must touch the Orange Safe-T base when running to first and fielders must touch only the white portion of the base to make an out. It is at the discretion of the umpire to call a base-runner out who repeatedly disregards this rule. If the player is advancing to second base (on a multiple-base hit) they may touch the white portion of first base.

There is no stealing or leadoffs (players cannot leave the base until the ball is struck).

Players must touch all the bases and should be taught to advance to the next base when the ball is actively in play. However, if the ball passes the Dead Ball Line and has landed in the catcher’s area before the runner is halfway to the next base the runner must go back to the original base.

This is an umpire discretion call that should be supported in the spirit of fair play by both coaches.

Umpires:

Umpires are an essential element of the T-Ball experience and they need to be part of the learning process with the coaches and children. The games should be seen as a teaching opportunity.

Umpires and the Umpire-in-Chief can ask parents to refrain from negative cheering during and after a game. Umpire-in-Chief can remove a parent from the game if they yell at the umpire, players or other parents.

Umpires can not be related to a player or coach playing in a game which they are umpiring. The Umpire-in-Chief can make an exception to this rule.

The umpire's decision is final. Coaches who wish to discuss a rule interpretation with an umpire must do so in the presence of the other team's head coach in a calm manner and shall not intimidate or show up the umpire in any way.

Umpires are encouraged, especially with younger players, to help the batter get set in the batters box. Coaches, as well, need to participate in this activity during the game.

Games start at 6:30 p.m. sharp and will last until dark with the objective of playing at least 3 full innings.

Time Management:

Coaches are required to have their teams prepared for quick inning changeovers.

In particular, coaches should have their catcher ready for the next inning before the seventh batter is at the plate. If the catcher is on base when the seventh batter comes up or is the seventh batter themselves then another player must catch for that inning. If the catcher is not ready on time the umpire may start the inning at his/her discretion without a catcher.

Changeovers between innings should take no more than two minutes and ideally should be conducted in one minute.

The umpire is always right and coaches should model this behaviour to the players. Coaches cannot question a rule interpretation during the course of an inning. A coach may speak to an umpire for clarification in between innings.

Coaches:

One coach may be in the outfield to supervise the younger players. If a team decides to have one coach in the outfield, the coach can not interfere with the play. The coach is not allowed to touch the ball or assist a player in picking up a ball or throwing it. Coaches are only allowed verbal instruction to players.

Otherwise, coaches are not allowed on the field during play but are encouraged to advise their players actively from the 1st and 3rd base coaching boxes. Coaches can call time and advise a batter or a fielder on the playing field.

Coaches must respect the decision of the umpire as it is final. He/She can discuss calmly the play after it is over, in the presence of the other coach, however the decision can not be changed. Coaches are to treat the umpires with respect at all times.

Coaches are to assist the umpire in ensuring appropriate behaviour from parents on their team. Parents are not allowed to negative cheer, yell at players on their team or the opposing team or at the umpire.

Both coaches should keep score of the game and compare results after each inning.

Players should only be told the score at the end of the game.

The Home Team is responsible for:

- Bringing out the equipment
- Bringing out the first aid box
- Put the equipment and first aid box back in the equipment room
- Sending the score to the league convener.

Parents

St Bonaventure Baseball League will not tolerate any negative cheering or unsportsmanlike behaviour from parents. Only positive cheering is permitted.

Parents are not to yell at the umpire at any time. If they are unhappy with a call they are to speak to their coach who will then address the umpire if needed. **PARENTS MAY NOT DISCUSS UMPIRE DECISIONS WITH THE UMPIRE.**

Parents are not to yell or speak rudely to any player on their team or on the opposing team.

Any parent who does not comply with these rules can be asked to leave the game immediately.

Parents are not allowed on the field at any time during the game and must remain behind the fence and/or benches at all times.

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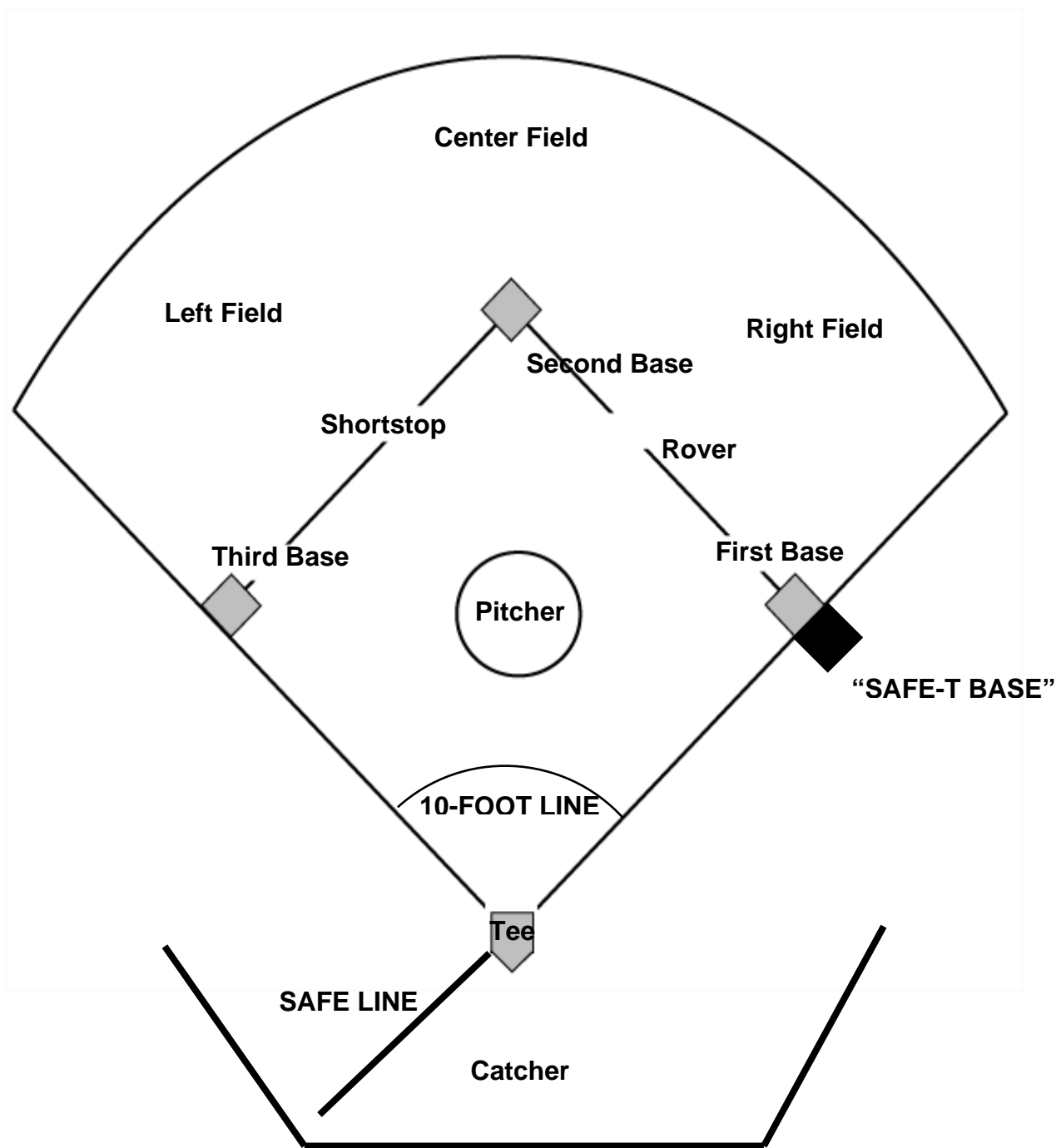
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T-BALL FIELD AND POSITIONS



Base runners must touch the orange portion of First Base (SAFE-T BASE on this diagram).

Players must cross "SAFE LINE" to score a run – they need not touch home plate.

A ball must cross the "10-foot" line to be a Fair Ball and be in play.

Only 7 players are allowed in the infield during play – including catcher.

All remaining players must be in the outfield.

Players cannot advance after the ball enters Home Plate area unless they are already halfway to the next base.