

Cabot Youth Baseball Association 4 Year-Old T-Ball Local League Rules

Objective

The objective of the Cabot 4 year-old T-Ball league is to introduce children to the basics of the game of baseball. The league is intended to offer families a safe and enjoyable experience in what for many may be their first exposure to the sport. With this objective in mind, these rules have been adopted by the Cabot Youth Baseball Association.

Official baseball rules will be observed except as provided in the official *Cal Ripken Baseball* rule book and in the following local league modifications.

Game

1. Games will be three innings or one hour in length, whichever occurs first.
2. A new Inning will not begin after 55 minutes into the game.
3. No official score will be kept.
4. Games will be supervised by the team coaches. No official league umpire will be employed.
5. A soft-core safety baseball will be used at all games and practices.

Batting/Offense

1. All players will bat in turn during the team's half-inning on offense regardless of outs.
2. The batting order will remain the same throughout the game. If a batter cannot or refuses to bat then his/her turn at bat will be skipped for that time at bat.
3. All offensive players at bat or on the bases must wear a batting helmet.
4. After all players have had a turn at bat, the team will switch from offense to defense regardless of outs and the opposing team will bat.
5. Teams will alternate offense and defense in like manner until three innings have been played or the time has expired.
6. No bunting is allowed. A half-swing is not considered to be a bunt.
7. A foul ball zone shall be set as an arc five feet in front of home plate. Batted balls must travel beyond this line or be ruled a foul ball.
8. Players will receive five swings at a ball placed on a batting tee. After five swings have been taken without hitting the ball beyond the foul ball zone, the next batter will take his/her turn. Balls that are batted foul outside the field of play (not inside the special foul zone in front of home plate) are not counted in the five swing limit.
9. The offensive team may station a batting coach near the tee to assist the batter in taking his/her position in the batter's box area and addressing the ball. The batting coach may adjust the height of the tee to place the ball at the proper position for each batter. The batting coach may not assist the batter in swinging at the ball. *It is recommended that the tee be placed in front of home plate rather than on top of the plate. The height of the ball when resting on the tee should be just above the batter's waist level.*
10. Base runners must maintain contact with the base until the ball is batted.

Defense

1. All players will take the field on defense.
2. The infield shall consist of a pitcher, first baseman, second baseman, shortstop, and third baseman. No catcher will be used.
3. Infielders other than the "pitcher" must remain at or behind the first-second and second-third infield base lines until the ball is batted.
4. The "pitcher" is a defensive position only and must remain within the pitcher's circle until the ball is batted.
5. All other defensive players shall be placed in the outfield.
6. The defensive team may station coaches in the field to help direct the defensive players.
7. Defensive coaches may not physically assist players in making defensive plays. Defensive coaches may not interfere with the offensive players in any way.
8. No infield fly rule will be used.
9. Time will be called whenever the pitcher is in possession of the ball and is inside the pitcher's circle on the infield or when the lead runner has been stopped on a base by a defensive fielder who is in possession of the ball and in such position as to cause the runner to be out if he/she attempts to advance (natural stoppage). *Example: Ball is hit into the outfield with a runner*

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at first base. An outfield player throws the ball to the infield where it is picked up by an infielder between second and third base. The runner at first base has rounded the bag at second base but stops and retreats to second base because the fielder is between the runner and third base with the ball. Time may then be called due to the natural stoppage of the play.

10. If time is called because the pitcher has the ball within the pitcher's circle, base runners who are at or beyond the halfway point to the next base may continue to advance to that base. Runners who have not reached the halfway point when the pitcher enters the pitcher's circle are required to return to the last base they safely touched before time was called.
11. If a defensive player overthrows the ball to a base, time will be called and the base runner(s) will be allowed to advance one base. If the ball is thrown past home plate, it will be considered an overthrow.
12. In any other case the ball is considered "live" and base runners may continue to advance until one of the above conditions for calling "time" is met.
13. In any event, time may not be called until the batter/runner has safely reached first base or has been put out before reaching first base.

Special Notes:

- If a player makes an out on the bases but refuses to leave the base and return to the dugout, he/she may remain on the base. Players should be instructed to vacate the bases after making an out, but don't force the issue if they do not.
- In the event a player runs in the wrong direction when running the bases there is no penalty for failing to retag bases when the runner attempts to correct the mistake.
- Coaches and parents should realize that the four year-old league is actually considered a pre-tee program and the players are of the very youngest possible age for participating in a team sport. Allowances must be made for the varying levels of mental and physical development that will be encountered in the children participating in this program.

Above all, this league is about having fun. Don't expect too much and don't press too hard for the kids to perform on the field. Enjoy the experience as a family activity and you will get the most out of your time at practice and during games.