



*Ash-Carleton Little League
Machine Pitch Rules (Ages 7-8)*

Particular areas that should be emphasized are:

Batting

- Be sure that all players hit in different spots in the order throughout the year.
- For those that are having trouble hitting, encourage good swings and at-bats, not just hits. Work on being selective and making contact – stress swinging at balls in or near the strike zone and lay off pitches that cannot be hit.
- Batters may not throw bats under any circumstances. A player's coach should warn any player for unintentionally throwing a bat that they will be called out if they continue to do so. Players who are called out for throwing a bat learn to stop the habit with surprising quickness.

Base Running

- Emphasis should be placed on the development of proper base running habits, not scoring runs. This includes:
- Knowing the situation – outs and lead runners
- Leaving base in fly ball/ground ball situations
- Making the base turns properly
- Using the base-coaches instead of looking for the ball.
- Causing confusion by sending runners while the ball is being fielded is not productive or instrumental and should not be encouraged or tolerated.

Fielding

- **Every player should have a chance to play every position and players should be rotated every 2 innings – preferably every inning. However, in the interest of safety coaches should consider the risk of injury when placing players.**
- Emphasize anticipation of the play and being in ready position when the ball is delivered to the plate.
- Stress knowing the situation and making the right play – force plays, number of outs, fly ball/ground ball situations.
- Teach your outfielders to get the ball into the infield as quickly as possible. ***Base runners cannot advance once the ball is in the infield in the possession of an infielder.***
- Avoid unnecessary throws – stop runners by getting the ball to infield quickly.



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Game Rules

1. The team with players in the field must supply a coach/parent to back up the catcher in an attempt to keep the game moving.
2. A bucket of balls will be supplied for game balls. (Need to have 10 balls.)
3. No new inning may start after 1 hour 20 minutes. Innings started prior to this time will be finished and at that time all games will be over and official.
4. A scorebook is provided to each team for keeping track of the batting order and each team's score.
5. All players present will bat.
6. **The team batting is retired after 3 outs, 5 runs are scored, or once through the entire batting order.,**
7. 11 Run rule is in effect all season. **If a team is leading by 11 runs after 4 innings or 6 runs after 5 innings, the game is a Mercy and will be over and official.**
8. There are no walks.
9. There are no free bases for being hit by a pitch.
10. Coaches should strongly encourage the batters to swing at balls that are around the plate and not wait for the "Perfect Pitch".
11. **A coach/volunteer of the batting team** will continue to feed the balls to the batter until a ball is hit or 5 strikes are pitched. A coach at the backstop will get the balls from the catcher and place them in a bucket.
12. There is no bunting, stealing, or infield fly rule.
13. There are no head first slides. Players should be discouraged from sliding headfirst.
14. Runner must attempt to slide, if taught, to avoid a collision and should be called "out" if they do not.
15. The base runner is not allowed to leave the base until the ball is hit. Players that leave the base before the ball is hit should be warned and be required to return to the original base. The runner should be called out if he continues to leave early.
16. Base runners may advance until the ball is in the infield **and in the possession of a defender. At that point, runners will either return to the previous base or advance to the next base per the umpire's discretion. The infield is defined as the region where the infield dirt meets the outfield grass and includes foul territory.**
17. **Ten players are allowed at one time on defense.** Four outfielders, four infielders, a pitcher, and a catcher.
18. Dead balls.
 - a. A batted ball hitting the pitching machine or machine operator is a dead ball. The batter is awarded first base and existing base runners advance only if "forced".
 - b. A ball overthrown past 1st or 3rd base that goes out of bounds is a dead ball. Players may continue to the base they were approaching prior to the ball going out of bounds.
 - c. A thrown ball hitting the pitching machine or machine operator is a dead ball. Players may continue to the base they were approaching prior to the ball hitting any of the above.
 - d. A batted ball that comes to rest inside the pitching circle is a dead ball. The batter is awarded first base and existing base runners advance only if "forced".
 - e. A thrown ball that comes to rest inside the pitching circle. Players may continue to the base they were approaching prior to the ball coming to rest.
19. **All batters and pitchers must wear a helmet. Pitchers should have a facemask on their helmet.**
20. Only 1 Defensive Coach in the field between 2nd Base and the Outfield
21. **There is no on-deck area.**
 - o The only batter with a bat in his hands should be the one up at the plate.
 - o The next batter up should get prepared to bat by getting a helmet on, putting on batting gloves, and deciding on a bat.
 - o Practice swings are **NOT ALLOWED** for safety concerns.
22. Must use league supplied uniforms. No altering of uniforms. No names on back.



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Use of Pitching Machine

All coaches and managers must thoroughly understand the operation of the pitching machine. The Player Representative will schedule demonstrations to allow coaches to become comfortable with the proper usage and operation of the machine. Lack of training and misunderstanding of operation will result in ineffective and counter-productive use of the machine.

The purpose of using machines is deliver pitches that are consistently in or near the strike zone at a speed that is more than just a “lob toss”.

It is preferred that all games are played using the pitching machine. However, the following exceptions are allowed:

1. In the event of the machine being inoperable or not functioning properly, the coaches will pitch to his/her team.
2. The pitching machine may be adjusted at any time if both coaches agree.
 - o Be sure the batter steps out of the batter box and at least two test pitches are thrown after making any adjustment to the machine.
 - o Be sure an adult is behind the plate to catch any practice pitches that are thrown.
 - o **The machine should not be adjusted for each batter. We are not looking to put the ball right at the belt of every batter. Due to their height some players may have to hit a high strike while others may have to hit a low strike.**