



COACHING

9 to 12 year olds

6-3-3 PLAYING TIME SYSTEM

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THE PURPOSE

The purpose of the 6-3-3 system is to help Coaches and Managers be fair to all players on their team. It is designed to make sure that all players get the chance to develop skills, game savvy and have fun with the Little League experience. During the season I think it is important for players to play a minimum of 3 innings per game and ideally get the chance to play a complete game every other game. This playing time approach takes all of the pressure off you as a coach because you have a system in place that is fair for everybody. It makes it really easy to do the lineups and parents love this approach as well.

Before your first game call a parent meeting to share your approach with players and parents. Tell the players and their parents that you use a system that is set up to be fair to all players and gives every player a chance for equal playing time during the year. Invite the parents to keep track of the number of innings their son or daughter plays and to let you know if you start to favor some players over others. This way the parents will understand your expectations and realize that no one gets special treatment when it comes to playing time, not your son or daughter and not the Big Als on your team.



Here is how the 6-3-3 system works for a team of 12 players.

Game # 1

- 6 Players start the game and play six innings ... the complete game.
- 3 Players start the game and play the first 3 innings then sit the rest of the game
- 3 Players sit out the 1st 3 innings then go into the lineup to play the last 3 innings.

Game #2

- The 6 players that played 3 innings in Game #1 get to start and play six innings ... the complete game. The other 6 players that played the complete game in Game #1 now play 3 innings each.
- 3 start the game and play 3 innings and come out of the lineup.
- 3 players sit out the first 3 innings then go into the lineup to play the last 3 innings

Game #3

- Just follow the sequence so that each player plays 6 innings one game then 3 the next game then back to 6 the next and so on.

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6-3-3 PLAYING TIME SYSTEM CONT.

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What happens if a player never comes to practice?

It is a reasonable expectation for all players to attend practices. If a player refuses to come to practice I think it would be fair to reduce the number of innings to 3, even on game days when it is the players turn to play 6 innings. When this happens reward the players that attend all of the time the extra innings that are now available.

What if a player does not get to the diamond on time on game days?

It is reasonable to expect players to get to the field 30 minutes before game time to get warmed up and stretched out for the game. This reduces the chance for injury and reinforces the importance of being on time. If a player is late for the game if they were scheduled to start move them to the one of the spots in the lineup playing the last 3 innings of the game. If they were scheduled to play 6 innings they now only play 3.

What happens if a player chooses to miss a game to do something else, go to a birthday party, on holidays or to study for a test?

In this case, they just miss whatever number of innings they were scheduled to play. As a coach you do not need to try to make up the innings that they missed. They just come back into the rotation wherever it is at. I don't mind at all if players choose to miss a game because of an important family or school event, I just ask them to let me know ahead of time so I know I have enough players for the game.

How do I reward the players that are keen and committed?

Players that come to every practice, are on time for games and make baseball a priority end up getting extra playing time because some of the other players are not as keen and committed and will miss practices and some games.

What if I have 13 players on the team, does this system still work?

Equal and fair playing time is still the goal. Just adjust your system and rotation so that at a minimum every player gets at least 3 innings.

What if a game is rained out or a 10 run rule shortens the game up to 4 innings?

If it looks like the game will end early make your roster switches after 2 innings so everyone gets at least 2 innings. Remember the little league replacement rule allows you to bring players back so if the weather clears up you could still go 2-2-1-1 and get all your players the 3 innings as planned.

I encourage you to give this approach a try. It is not an official rotation that you are required to use in your league, just a suggestion on how to make the Little League experience a little more exciting, fun and fair to all kids on your team.