

Universal T-Ball Rules (Regardless of Team Size)

- **1st week “Meet and Greet”**
- **2nd week through 5th Week League – (see below structure)**
- **6th week “Playoff League” (See below structure)**

1. Teams & Game Structure

- **Players per team:** Usually 10–12, but only 10 play in the field at once.
 - **Innings:** Most games are 3 to 5 innings.
 - **Length of Game:** 45 minutes to 1 hour, regardless of innings completed.
 - **No official score:** Many leagues don’t keep score to focus on fun and development.
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Batting

- All players bat each inning (inning ends after the last batter).
 - **Batting tee:** Ball is hit off a stationary tee (no pitching).
 - No strikeouts or walks.
 - If a batter misses, they keep swinging until they hit the ball.
 - Final batter of the inning typically runs all the way around the bases.
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Base Running

- No leading off or stealing bases.
 - Runners must stay on the base until the ball is hit.
 - One base per hit unless the ball goes past the outfielders.
 - Players should advance base-by-base. Overthrows do **not** result in extra bases in most leagues.
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Fielding

- 10 players in the field (usually includes 4 outfielders).
- Everyone gets a chance to play infield and outfield during the game.

- The defensive team tries to field the ball and throw it to the correct base.
 - Plays are made at first base, but all batters run the bases regardless of the play outcome.
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Outs

- Outs are recorded, but teams don't change sides until all players have batted.
 - Common outs include:
 - Ball caught in the air
 - Force outs at bases
 - Tag outs
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Safety & Conduct

- Helmets must be worn while batting and running bases.
 - Only one batter at a time near the tee.
 - Bats are only used at home plate.
 - Coaches are encouraged to be on the field to instruct players.
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Optional Rules (League-Dependent)

- Rotate players through all positions over the season.
 - Limit innings per player in key positions (e.g., pitcher or shortstop).
 - Award all kids for participation (medals, certificates, etc.).
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Adjusting T-Ball Rules for Fewer Players

Team Size Options

- **Minimum per team:** You can play with as few as **5–6 players**.
- If you have **less than 10**, just reduce the number of fielders, not the bases or batters.

Modified Fielding Setup

With fewer players, simplify fielding like this:

- **5 players:** 1B, 2B, SS, 3B, and one outfielder (center).
- **6–7 players:** Add pitcher and more outfielders as needed.
- Coaches can stand in as **temporary catchers or field guides**.

Rotations

- Rotate kids through **different positions** more frequently.
- If teams are very small, you can play **shorter innings** (e.g., 3 batters per side).

Creative Options

If you're really short on players:

- **Combine teams** for scrimmage-style play.
- **Parents or coaches** can step in temporarily to assist fielding.
- Use a **"ghost runner"** (imaginary runner) to keep base running fair when a player is on base and due to bat again. (Or a Parent)

Game Goals Stay the Same

Even with fewer players:

- Every kid gets to bat each inning.
- Fielders still try to make plays.
- Focus remains on **fun, learning, and safety**—not competition.

Season Overview (6 Weeks)

Week 1 – Meet & Greet / Mini Practice

- All teams gather at the field.
- Parents meet coaches.

- Kids practice hitting, running bases, and throwing.
 - Coaches explain expectations and fun rules.
 - Optional: short friendly scrimmage or station rotation.
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3. Weeks 2–5 – League Games

- Each team plays 1 game per week.
 - Rotate game times to give each team variety.
 - No standings or scores are required—but you can track games for seeding if desired.
 - Encourage skill-building and fun over competition.
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4. Week 6 – Playoff Festival (Fun Format)

"T-Ball Championship Carnival" Format (Works with 4–6 teams)

- **Game 1:** Random matchups (or top vs bottom seed if keeping record)
- **Game 2:** Winners play in the “Championship”
- **Game 3:** All other teams play in “Fun Bowl” games
- All teams play **two games**

Choose Your Format Based on Team Count:

► 4 Teams

Single Elimination + Consolation

- **Game 1:** #1 seed vs #4
- **Game 2:** #2 seed vs #3
- **Finals:** Winners play for the **Championship**
- **Consolation:** Losers play for **3rd place**

► 6 Teams

Mini-Tournament

- Top 2 seeds get a **bye**
- **Quarterfinals:** #3 vs #6 and #4 vs #5
- **Semifinals:** Winners play #1 and #2
- **Championship + 3rd place game**

► 8 Teams

Bracket or Festival Style

- Bracketed tournament (single elimination)
 - Each team gets at least 2 games (winners advance, others play consolation)
 - Consider multiple fields to run games side-by-side
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⚬ Game Day Setup (Week 6)

- Each game = ~30–45 minutes
 - Rotate positions every inning
 - All players bat each inning
 - Use a fun scoreboard or announcer if available!
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Awards Ceremony (End of Day)

- **Participation medals** for everyone
- **Team trophies** (can be fun titles):
 - "Team Spirit Champions"
 - "All-Star Hustlers"
 - "Sportsmanship Stars"
- Optional: team photos, treats, bounce house, or family picnic