

St. Joe Little League Prep Rules and Conduct

1. **Game Duration and Scoring:**

- Games will be 6 innings or 1 hour and 15 minutes, whichever comes first. Any inning starting after 1 hour and 15 minutes shall be declared the last inning. No inning shall start after 1 hour and 15 minutes, with tied games permitted.
- A maximum of FIVE (5) runs may be scored in an inning. The inning ends when the fifth run scores, except for the 6th inning or the last declared inning, where the inning ends when the pitcher has the ball in the circle and no runner is advancing from third base past the halfway mark. A team can score as many runs as possible until three outs or ten batters.

2. **Pitching Machine and Hitting:**

- The pitching machine will be set at 38 mph, and the positioning of the machine may be adjusted if it has been hit, bumped, if the locking mechanism slips or repeated unhittable balls are pitched. The speed is NEVER changed.
- If a ball in play hits the pitching machine and goes foul, the ball is foul unless touched by a player in fair territory. If it stays fair, it is a fair ball.
- A batter may receive five (5) pitches or strike out. If the last pitch is a foul ball, an additional pitch is awarded. The last pitch must be hittable between the bottom of the knees and the top of the shoulders.
- The last batter must hit the ball or strike out.
- A continuous batting order will be used for each game.

3. **Fielding and Defensive Play:**

- Each player must play a minimum of six (6) defensive outs in a six-inning game. This requirement is waived for shortened games due to the run rule, time limit, or weather.
- Each player may only play a maximum of 6 defensive out in one position (excluding the catching position)
- Up to eleven (11) defensive players, including extra outfielders, may be used. A maximum of 5 outfielders shall be used. Outfielders must be stationed in the outfield grass at the time of the pitch. Catcher must be used if you have 11 or more players in

the batting order. If less than 11, you are permitted to not have a catcher and use extra outfielders.

- One (1) defensive coach is allowed in the outfield for player instructions. Two (2) adult base coaches shall be used, requiring four (4) coaches per team.

- No defensive chatter is allowed. Offensive players may only communicate with other offensive players.

- Courtesy runners may be used for injured players or the catcher, from the last recorded inning, with two outs. The courtesy runner shall be the player who made the previous out. If there are no outs in the inning, go back to the previous inning.

4. **Base Running and Dead Balls:**

- No player may advance to another base when the pitcher has possession of the ball with both feet within the pitcher's circle unless the runner has advanced with both feet beyond the halfway mark before the pitcher has the ball. Play is dead once pitcher has control of the ball within the circle.

- The ball is dead after a pitch and when the catcher is returning the ball to the pitcher. No running on an overthrow from catcher to pitcher; the ball is dead until entering the pitching machine.

- No bunting is allowed.

- Helmets with "C" flap attachments are illegal unless attached by the manufacturer.

- The infield fly rule is enforced.

5. **Injury Protocol:**

- In the event of a player injury while the ball is alive, play will stop immediately. If the injury is caused by a hit ball, the batter will be awarded first base, and all base runners will advance one base.

6. **Game Requirements:**

- The home team will occupy the first base dugout.

- Home team is required to set up field prior to game

- Away team is required to take tear down and take care of field after or in between games. (Raking in between games)
- No player shall have a bat in hand until it is their turn to hit. Bats must be retrieved by players with helmets.
- Each team must provide one new game ball.
- An adult shall run the scoreboard.

7. ****Umpire Authority****:

- The umpire's decision is final.
- The umpire (if available) is responsible for all fair/foul calls.

8. ****Sportsmanship****:

- Show respect to opponents, officials, teammates, and spectators at all times.
- Negative or abusive language and unsportsmanlike conduct are prohibited and will result in disciplinary action.
- Players should acknowledge good performance by opponents with appropriate gestures, such as a handshake or verbal compliment.
- Win with humility and lose with dignity. Accept all outcomes with grace.
- Encouragement and positive reinforcement should be prioritized over criticism.
- Respect officials' decisions and refrain from arguing calls.
- Support teammates by encouraging their efforts, regardless of the outcome.
- Demonstrate fairness by adhering to the rules and encouraging others to do the same.
- Any disputes should be addressed to the league officials respectfully.
- Machine Pitch is a **developmental league**. Prioritize development over winning.
- "Running the score up" on an opposing team is not permitted in this division. If a team get ahead by 10 runs at any point, the coach should take the opportunity to adjust player positions on defense and play station to station on offense. This is to continue

teaching sportsmanship and developing players on both sides while maintaining the integrity of the league.

9. ****Spectators****

- No parents or family members of players are allowed past the opening of the dugouts. This includes the area between the fencing and the shed.
- No parent is allowed in the dugouts without a background check, unless attending to an injury to their child.
- Spectators are encouraged to not yell out directions to the players. Please let the coaches coach. This is intended to help reduce confusion for the kids.
- Coaches are responsible for the actions of the spectators of their team. Failure to deter unsportsmanlike conduct from spectators will result in disciplinary action from the league.

By participating in the league, all players, coaches, and spectators agree to abide by these rules and promote a positive, respectful environment for everyone involved.