

# BVAC BASEBALL RULES

COVID information on the last page

**OBJECTIVES:** To teach the values of team participation and enjoyment of the game - including clean, friendly competition. To teach every child how to properly field balls, bat and run the bases. To eliminate the need to develop pitching at an early age. To eliminate batter's fears of being hit by pitches. COVID guidelines are listed at the end.

**UMPIRES:** BVAC will provide one umpire in all divisions. The umpire has the right to remove anyone from the game or stands that is making comments to anyone that the umpire considers unnecessary or inappropriate. This includes: players, coaches, parents or other spectators.

**SCOREKEEPER:** The home team will provide the official scorekeeper. The visiting team should provide an assistant scorekeeper to sit with the official scorekeeper. The scorekeeper must sit behind the fence close to the umpire. Player's first and last names must be entered in the score book. The home team is the second team listed on the schedule.

We will not keep score in T-Ball I (only)– Just batting order. All T-Ball I players will receive gold medals. T-Ball II **will** keep score, but all players will also receive a gold medals. Machine Pitch I and II **-will** keep score and 1<sup>st</sup> place will receive gold medals and 2<sup>nd</sup> place will receive silver medals.

**COACHES:** You need several people to coach a baseball/t-ball team. During the games; you will need a 1st base coach, 3rd base coach and someone to assist in keeping the batters in order that will have players ready to bat. This will keep the game moving faster, so we can get more innings for each team.

Coaches may verbally aid their runners from the 1st and 3rd bases. It is understood that the coach must not physically interfere with the play or in any way delay the progress of the game. A coach may not touch a player at any time while they are running the bases or playing in the field. If a coach touches a runner, the player will be called out. Parents and coaches may not run the bases with the player.

Bring a starting lineup for batting order and for field positions, and this will help to get in more innings.

T-Ball Coaches: Only one coach is allowed in the outfield when you are defense. The Coach will stand behind the 2<sup>nd</sup> base. No other coach may enter the playing field during play.

Offense Coaching Position for all Divisions: For the **batting team**- you may only have 1 coach at 1<sup>st</sup> base and 1 coach at 3<sup>rd</sup> base and both must be off the field. If a runner is on 2<sup>nd</sup> they must look to the 3<sup>rd</sup> base coach for instruction as to run or not.

- **MACHINE PITCH:** Before the first game of the evening the batting coach will line up the pitching machine for the game.

**PLAYERS:** Players are allowed to play up one division. Teams require a minimum of 7 players to start the game. For all divisions there will be 10 players on the field. Players who show up late will be added to the bottom of the lineup. Each player should play at least 2 innings of each game in the field. There are unlimited substitutions but they are only made when a team is on defense.

- **FEEES:** Fees are due by the registration deadline. Players who sign up after the deadline on April 30th will pay a \$15.00 late fee (no exceptions). No players will be added to the roster after June 1<sup>st</sup>.

- T-BALL I: 3 and 4 year olds.
- T-BALL II: 5 and 6 year olds/Kindergarten.
- MACHINE PITCH I: 1st and 2nd grade.
- MACHINE PITCH II: 3rd and 4th grade.

**UNIFORMS:** All teams will wear official BVAC shirts from the current season. A player may not participate in the games without a current BVAC shirt (no exceptions). If a player gets their shirt after the game begins, they may report to the umpire and join the game. BVAC will order all players shirts. Team colors will be chosen at the coaches meeting. Coaches may order themselves a shirt for a \$20.00 fee. For safety reasons no player may add their name to the back of their shirt. Any player who does so will not be able to play until their shirt has been replaced at their expense. (\$20)

**SEASON:** Schedules and rain out schedules will be posted on the BVAC website at [www.bvacsports.org](http://www.bvacsports.org). We only play a regular season schedule. There will be no tournament at the end and all games during the season will count in the standings. Games will only be rescheduled if there is a rainout.

**GAMES:** If a game is rained out before it is completed, it will be continued at a later date from the stopping point. For rain out purposes; T-Ball I & II will be considered complete if 2 (two) innings have been played. Machine Pitch I & II will be considered complete if 3 (three) innings have been played.

All games will begin with a prayer. Game time is start time. Teams that are not on time will forfeit. Please move your players on and off the field quickly so every team can have plenty of playing time. There will be a 10 (ten) batter limit in T-Ball I & II, and a 6 (six) run limit in Machine Pitch I & II (if batting and more than runner number # 6 comes in only a total of 6 runs will count) All players will bat, even if they were not in the field and substitutions will occur only on defense.

If the ball is hit by the batter: and it hits a teammate running from any base the runner will be out (if the ball has not been touched by any fielder)

**PICTURE DAY:** Check your schedule for your picture times. Pictures will be taken rain or shine, either behind the church or in the gym. Pictures will be ready in the concession stand as soon as possible.

**PRACTICE:** Due to the number of teams, each team is allowed a single, 1 hour practice per week at FLC. For teams practicing at FLC, there is a porta-potty near the backstop of the big field, by the parking lot.

**RAINOUTS:** Coaches, please call the rain out line for last minute information. You can find information for rained out games in the "News" section of the website. If a game is rained out, it will be rescheduled as soon as possible. We will update the schedule online as soon as we can. If your game is rained out, please leave the fields. With multiple fields it is possible for one field to be rained out while another is still playing. If we have a rainy season it is possible we could move the "field" to the outfield to play (only if massive rain days occur).

**LIGHTNING:** If you see lightning you may call it to the umpire's attention, however, a team that leaves the field before the game is cancelled will forfeit. In the event of cancellation, exit the field as soon as possible.

**HEAT:** We will do everything we can to play the games on schedule, but the decision will be made in the office if we cancel. If we play, be sure to bring a water bottle and make sure everyone drinks water between innings.

**INJURIES:** The umpire will stop play for an injury during the game. All other players on the field need to take a knee. If necessary, the umpire will bring the coach onto the field. If the player is hurt the coach can allow the

player's parents to enter the field. It will be up to the umpire to decide when to stop the game. The umpire should take into consideration the age of the players when deciding to suspend play. No player will be allowed on the field with a cast or metal brace of any kind.

**GAME TIME:** No new innings will start after 55 minutes. The current inning will be completed if started before 55 minutes has passed. The home team keeps score. The scorekeeper must sit near the fence behind the umpire. In the event of a tie, no extra innings will be played.

- T-BALL 1: We will not track win-loss record. T-BALL 2. We will keep score.
- ALL teams must stay in batting order.

**PLAYING FIELD:**

- T-BALL: Bases are 45 feet apart. There will be a 10 foot foul ball arc from the 1st baseline to the 3rd baseline measured from home plate. No one may play a field position closer than 35 feet from home plate. All players must stay behind the pitching circle. The pitcher stays in the pitching circle until the ball is hit.
- MACHINE PITCH: Bases are 50 feet apart. The pitcher's position is 35 feet from home plate.

**EQUIPMENT:** No metal spikes are allowed, rubber cleats or tennis shoes only. Players must provide their own glove. A batter may use any Little League/T-Ball bat they bring, as long as the opposing team may also use it.

- T-BALL: Each team will provide a T-Ball before the start of each game. Four T-Balls will be furnished to each team at the coaches meeting. T-Ball stands maybe checked out for a \$35.00 deposit which will be returned at the end of the season. Checks will be held for two weeks after the last game. T-Ball stands should be returned to the BVAC office.
- MACHINE PITCH: Catchers must wear full protective equipment (face mask, chest protector, shin guards) when their team is on defense. BVAC will provide a set of catcher's equipment for games. All batters are required to wear a helmet while running the bases. Each team will provide a limited flight dimple baseball before the start of each game. Four Machine Pitch balls will be furnished to each team at the coaches meeting. If you would like to check out a set of catchers gear for practices -- \$150.00 deposit -- we will hold a check for the deposit and it will be returned when the equipment bag is returned to the office.

**BATTING:** All players will bat in order until every team member has batted. Batting order cannot be changed during the game, except to add a late arriving player or to remove a player leaving early or injured.

No bunting is allowed. No pinch-hitting is allowed. Any batter throwing a bat will be called out. There will be no warnings and no base runner may advance or score.

- T-BALL: A maximum of ten players will bat per inning. No batter can bat more than once out of ten at-bats, unless the team has less than 10 players. If there are 9 players the batting order should start over at the tenth at-bat. The next inning should continue the batting order from the previous inning. All players will bat in order until every team member has batted. **The scorekeeper must alert the umpire when the 10th batter is up to bat.** The inning ends when the 10th batter completes their at-bat.

**PARENTS:** Will not run the bases with their child, allow them to learn to play the game.

- MACHINE PITCH: Three outs per inning. Six run limit per inning (if a 7<sup>th</sup> or 8<sup>th</sup> player makes it home, runs will not count). Once per game, each player is allowed a "look" at one pitch that will not be counted towards the ball or strike count. A player is not required to take a "look" and may choose to swing at the pitch. If a player attempts to hit a pitch, it will not be considered a "look" and the play will be added to the count.

OUTS: There will be no extra balls or strikes given, players striking out will be out and must return to the end of the batting order. If an out is made on the play, the batter is out and must leave the field. They are not allowed to continue running the bases (in all divisions).

#### BALL IN PLAY:

T-BALL: The ball is in play after the umpire places the ball on the tee and calls "Play ball" Then the batter will attempt to hit the ball off the tee. There will be a 10 foot arc from home plate that runs from the 1st baseline to the 3rd baseline. The ball must travel beyond the arc to be considered "in play", if a fielder picks it up before it leaves the arc it is foul ball. If the ball is hit but does not leave the arc, runners on base cannot advance. If the bat hits the tee and ball simultaneously, it will be ruled a fair ball as long as the conditions for a fair ball are met. There will be no stealing bases and no lead offs.

**Advancement of Runners:** (T-BALL) Teams advance players differently when they coach. Some teams stop the runners at each base, and some have the runners clear as many bases as they can before time is called. BOTH of these ways do NOT conflict the rules, but here is the problem.

Stopping players at every base has advantages for the defense. "Over throws" are not a problem because the runner has stopped, so even if the batter gets a great hit to the outfield they can only advance to first base. This style of play only helps the defense but runners are learning the wrong thing. Baseball does not really stop at each base.

Keeping the players running has advantages for the offense. It teaches correct running of the bases and watching for the fielders trying to get them out. But the problem is, if they keep running and have "over throws" by the defense, every batter could have a home run, because of the player's inexperience of catching and throwing the ball with accuracy. This play only helps the offense and discourages the defense from trying to make the correct play.

EITHER one of these is okay because both teams play offense and defense an equal number of times. So there is really no advantage regarding scoring.

However, to prevent teaching the wrong thing to the players, there is a better solution: When the batter hits the ball, they can run the bases as far as they can. **AS SOON** as the defense has one player holding the ball in his hand, no matter where they are on the field the umpire will call time. For example, if a player is half way to 2<sup>nd</sup> they can stop on second; or if less than halfway, they must return to first base. This will give the players a chance to try to make an out but not let the runner advance because of fielding skills. This keeps both teams learning baseball properly.

This also encourages the fielders to stop the ball and try to make a play, and encourages the batters to try to hit better and advance more bases.

#### **T-BALL – 10<sup>th</sup> BATTER :**

When the 10<sup>th</sup> batter comes up to bat, the rule changes a bit. The coaches, umpire and scorekeeper will call out to the field notifying everyone that the person about to bat is the 10<sup>th</sup> batter for the inning. When that player hits the ball, he and every runner on a base can keep running until they reach the home plate. The only way the runs will be stopped is if the defensive team gets the ball and runs to home. They do not have to put it on the tee, but must put their foot on home plate while holding the ball in their hand.

The umpire will call "time" at the appropriate moment.

**MACHINE PITCH - STOPPING RUNNERS:**

- MACHINE PITCH: The umpire will call “Play ball”, and place the ball in the machine. Foul balls will be called and no walks will be given. For Machine Pitch I the machine speed will be set between 28 - 32 mph. For Machine Pitch II the machine will be set between 32 - 35 mph. Machine speed will be adjusted by the umpire as they see fit. There will be no stealing of bases and no lead offs.
  - If the ball is hit and it contacts the machine, the ball is still in play. If the ball is hit and it contacts the machine and then is caught in the air it is an OUT.
  - MACHINE PITCH: If a ball is overthrown and goes out of the playing field, runners may advance one base. If a batted ball hits the pitching machine the batter is awarded one base, all other base runners will advance one base. They cannot be thrown out, nor can they advance more than one base. Any runner that is hit by a batted ball is out, unless it has first been touched by a fielder while in fair territory.
  - MACHINE PITCH: The umpire will call “time” once the ball has been returned to the pitching mound or when he judges the play to be dead. If a play is being made on a runner and the ball travels out of the playing field, runners will advance one base, before play is ruled dead.
- MACHINE PITCH COACHING POSITIONS: No coach may enter the field during play. It is understood that the coach must not physically interfere with the play or in any way delay the progress of the game. Offensive coaches may not touch any player while they are running the bases or that player is out. Coaches are not allowed to run bases with their players.
- ADDITIONAL RULES: If not specified, Little League Baseball.

ZERO TOLERANCE: There will be NO harassing of the officials, coaches, players or fans, NO pets, NO alcohol, NO smoking (chewing and Vapor), and NO profanity at the game, including the parking lot and the practice fields. No chanting or direct insults to players from the spectators will be allowed. Coaches are responsible for the conduct of their players, parents and guests. If any fan should become verbally abusive to any player, coach or umpire, the umpire will stop the game and warn the fan. If flagrant, the game will be suspended until the offending person(s) leaves the park. Any physical contact will result in immediate ejection. The umpire’s decision regarding ejections is final. Please allow your children to enjoy the game!

**FOR 2021 SEASON:**

Due to the new restrictions of social distancing, BVAC will enforce the following rules.

We are asking people from the 1<sup>st</sup> game to leave as quickly as possible so another team can take your places to begin their game. We highly recommend you bring your own hand sanitizer for your child after each game.

We will have the bleacher by field 9 closed so everyone will need to bring a chair, (until we get the “all clear”).

You will need a chair for all T-Ball games.

We will not do a “good game” handshake after a game. We will line up the kids and they can give an “air high five” “good game” (no touching) to each other at a 6 ft distance. Each team will need to clean their bat after each batter.

T-Ball: We will be playing on field 10 and possibly a soccer field (which will be all grass) depending on the number of teams, so we can spread out as much as possible. Bring your own chair.

Machine Pitch: All games will be on field 9. We will spread them out as much as possible. Bring your own chair.

**BASEBALL COVID Information:**

- Games times will be staggered, and fields will be far enough apart that will limit the number of people moving on and off the fields.
- Face mask are required for everyone- from your parking spot to the fields.
- Parents will be required to bring their own chairs and spread out to maintain 6 ft distance to watch the game. Bleachers will be closed.
- We encourage only 2 parents per player to attend a game.
- Vulnerable spectators will be encouraged to stay home.
- Spectators will be encouraged to wear masks once seated for the game. Players can remove their mask when on the game field.
- No handshakes at the captains meeting.
- No touching of teammates during huddles and cheers.
- We encourage all Machine Pitch players to have their own helmet.
- No “high-fives” will be given between the teams when the game ends.
- Parents will be encouraged to leave or wait in their car during practices.
- Parents will be required to maintain 6 feet distance for all practices if they are out of their cars.
- If a player or parent has a fever or is suspected of being ill, they must stay home.
- Throw away your water bottles please clean your area.
- Wash your hands all day long! Please sanitize your hands before and after games.
- Parents/players will be required to leave the fields quickly after their game.