**Coach Pitch Baseball Gameplay Rules**

This recreational and instructional league aims to help children enjoy and understand the game of baseball, learn its basic skills, and foster teamwork, fair play, good sportsmanship, and a love for the game.

**Field Dimensions**

* **Pitching Distance**: 40 feet.
* **Bases**: 60 feet apart.

**Equipment**

1. **Game Balls**: Provided by the Recreation Department.
2. **Catchers**: Must wear full protective equipment, including a helmet, mask, chest protector, shin guards, and cup.
3. **Bats**: Composite, two-piece, or three-piece bats are not allowed. No restrictions on size or length.

**Roster Rules**

1. **Eligibility**: Players must currently be in 1st or 2nd grade at the time of registration.

**General Gameplay Rules**

1. **Team Size**: Teams field 9 or 10 players, with outfielders positioned distinctly from infielders.
2. **Coaches on Field**: A maximum of 2 coaches may station themselves beyond the infield to instruct defensive players.
3. **Player Participation**:
	* Every player must play at least 2 consecutive innings by the top of the 4th inning.
	* No player may play more than two consecutive innings in the infield or outfield.
4. **Batting Order**: All players bat in a continuous lineup. Late arrivals bat at the end. Coaches are encouraged to rotate the batting order each game.
5. **Play Conclusion**: Play ends when the lead runner stops advancing or an infielder holds the ball (umpire’s discretion).
6. **Stealing/Leading Off**: Not allowed.
7. **Injuries**: Play stops immediately. Injured players do not count as outs.

**Game Duration**

1. **Innings**: Games consist of 6 innings. The first 3 innings are coach pitch, and the remaining are player pitch.
2. **Time Limit**: No new inning begins after 1 hour 30 minutes. Exception: At least one inning of player pitch must be completed.
3. **Final Inning**: The bottom of the final inning does not need to be played if the home team is leading.

**Scoring**

1. **Runs/Outs Limit**: Maximum of 10 batters, 5 runs, or 3 outs per inning, except the 6th inning, where scoring is unlimited.
2. **Mercy Rule**: A game ends if a team leads by 10 runs after 4½ innings (home team) or 5 innings (visiting team).
3. **Official Game Definition**: A game is official after 4 innings. The score of a called game is the score at the end of the last complete inning.

**Pitching Rules**

**Coach Pitch Rules**

1. **Pitching**: Coaches pitch overhand from the rubber. Relief pitching is allowed.
2. **Player Pitcher Position**: The defensive pitcher must field from a position off to the side and behind the coach pitcher and cannot move until the pitch crosses the plate.
3. **Pitches per Batter**: Each batter is allowed 6 pitches or 3 swinging strikes (which ever come first). If the ball is not hit in fair territory, the batter is out.
4. **Interference**:
	* The coach must make a legitimate attempt to avoid contact; however, if a batted ball strikes the coach pitcher, the ball is dead, and the batter is awarded first base.
	* If the coach intentionally allows the ball to hit them (umpire’s judgment), the batter is out.

**Player Pitch Rules**

1. **Pitch Count**: Players may pitch up to 65 pitches per day.
2. **Three-Batter Minimum**: Pitchers must face at least three batters or pitch to the end of a half-inning unless removed for injury or illness.
3. **Strikeouts/Walks**: Allowed during player-pitch innings.
4. **Balks/Third Strike**: Not enforced.
5. **Mound Visits**: Each team is allowed one mound visit per inning. A second visit in the same inning requires a pitching change.

**Batting Rules**

1. **Pitches per Batter**: Each batter is allowed 6 pitches or 3 swinging strikes (whichever comes first).
2. **Foul Ball Rule**: A batter cannot be called out swinging on a foul ball. If the 6th pitch is fouled off, the batter may continue.
3. **Hit by Pitch**: A batter hit by a pitched ball is not awarded first base, but the pitch counts toward the limit.
4. **Bunting**: Not allowed.
5. **Foul Territory**: A batted ball that fails to leave the home plate dirt is considered foul and counts as a strike.

**Fielding Rules**

1. **Positioning**:
	* Players should rotate through multiple defensive positions throughout each game.
	* No player should play the same position more than one inning.
	* Every player must play at least one inning in the infield.
2. **Outfielder Positioning**: Outfielders must remain behind a designated line until the ball is live.
3. **Play Stoppage**:
	1. A ball is live until thrown to an infielder and held under control.
	2. Runners more than halfway to the next base may advance; others must return.
4. **Overthrows**:
	1. Overthrows at first base allow the batter to advance one base only.
	2. Players may not score on an overthrow.
5. **Infield Fly Rule**: Not in effect.

**Base Running Rules**

1. **Leading Off**: Runners must remain in contact with the base until the ball is hit.
2. **Overthrows**:
	* The batter-runner may advance one base.
	* Other runners may advance based on play but cannot score.
3. **Sliding**: Headfirst sliding is prohibited. Violations result in the runner being called out.
4. **Physical Assistance**: Coaches must stay at least 6 feet from the baseline and may not physically assist players.

**Stopping a Play**

1. **Play Stoppage**: The ball is dead, and TIME is called when the lead runner stops advancing.
2. **Base Runners**: When the lead runner stops, other runners must attempt to advance or return to base. TIME is called when all runners stop.

**Umpires**

1. **Officials**: Games may have two youth umpires (ages 13–14) or one adult umpire.

**Scoring & Scheduling**

1. **Game Scores**: Home teams must submit scores to the league coordinator within 48 hours.
2. **Schedule Changes**: Must be communicated to the league and updated online.

**Wild Card Games & Tiebreakers**

1. **Points**: Teams earn 3 points for a win, 1 point for a loss. Missing a game results in -2 points.
2. **Tiebreakers**: Head-to-head results and runs allowed determine standings.
3. **Wild Card Games**: Final matchups pair teams by standings to ensure competitive games.