

# **Williamsburg Youth Baseball League**

## **6 Year Old Rookie [Tee-Ball / Coach Pitch] Rules - 2021**

*WYBL Rules supersede relevant sections in the Cal Ripken Rules.  
Refer to the Cal Ripken Rules for other rules that remain in force.*

### **League Information & The WYBL Way**

The Rookie League seeks to build on the instructional spirit of Tee-Ball and to prepare players to be comfortable in the Machine Pitch leagues that follow. Managers, Coaches and parents should make it their goal to help every player have a positive experience every time they take the field. We depend on parents and coaches alike remaining relentlessly positive to extend WYBL's tradition of excellent teaching and superb sportsmanship.

### **Game Information**

All games will be played at the Warhill Sports Complex. On rainy days or when the weather is questionable, call 220-1530 after 4:00 p.m. on weekdays to learn whether your game will be played. Rainouts will be rescheduled and updated on [www.WilliamsburgBaseball.com](http://www.WilliamsburgBaseball.com). Also on the League Web site are details on signing up for game cancellation notices via text.

### **Time Limit**

Games will last 1:15 minutes or 6 innings. On Saturday, when there is a game following yours, please leave the field promptly after 1:15 so that the next 2 teams can start their game on time.

### **Five Coach-Pitch Pitches; Then Tee**

The batter will have a maximum of five pitches to hit a fair ball that travels more than twenty feet, shown by an arc drawn from foul line to foul line. A batted ball that does not travel twenty feet is foul. If the batter does not hit the fifth pitch across the 20 foot arc in fair territory, the batter will then hit from the tee. The tee should be adjusted so that the batter takes a level swing. Players may continue to bat from the tee until they hit a fair ball that travels more than twenty feet subject to the coach's discretion.

### **Four-Run Limit**

The batting order for each team shall consist of all players present, and they will bat in turn until either 3 outs are recorded or 4 runs are scored.

### **Base Running: Leaving Early; Advancing on Outfield Balls & Overthrows**

Base runners may not leave the base until the ball is hit. If the base runner violates this rule, coaches will emphasize and explain it. If violations continue the runner may be returned to the base he left as the play's outcome permits.

When a ball thrown in from the outfield reaches the imaginary plane of the baselines, the runner(s) may advance only to the base they are going to at that point, and only at their own risk.

An overthrow occurs when a fielder attempts to make a defensive play and throws the ball beyond his or her intended target. On overthrows, the runner may advance only to the base they are running to, regardless if the ball stays in play or goes out of play. When a runner has made a

definite move toward the next base before the overthrow occurs, that runner may advance to that base at their own risk.

### **Bat Specifications**

Metal and wooden bats are acceptable. Metal bats must bear the USA Baseball logo to be legal for play.

### **Bunting**

Bunting is not allowed; fake bunting is not allowed.

### **Catchers and Coaching Catchers**

The Rookie League's goal, as with live pitching, is to make new catchers comfortable. Coaches should encourage players to try catching but understand that all six-year-olds may not be ready straightaway; players should not be forced to catch. Catchers will wear a catcher's helmet, a chest protector, shin guards, and a protective cup.

Each Manager should consider assigning an Assistant Coach to work with catchers during games. This coach should help catchers gear up and remove gear between innings, to keep the game moving, and also work with them during play by standing near the backstop to assist as necessary. The catcher's defensive coach should keep a bucket alongside, also by the backstop.

Catchers will position themselves behind the plate and help move the game along as much as they can; the Assistant Coach is key because this will differ among players. For example, some more advanced catchers may crouch behind the plate and return the ball to the coach pitcher; others may stand closer to the fence and help retrieve a missed pitch, either throwing it back to the Coach Pitcher or tossing it to his or her Defensive Coach's for return to the bucket. The Assistant Coach should help guide his or her catcher's approach, balancing the goals of developing catching skills and keeping the game moving.

### **Coaches**

The offensive team's coach will pitch. The defensive team may position two coaches in the outfield to assist their players. Base coaches and the pitching coach will serve as umpires. Calls should be made in way that all players receive as positive, and explanations offered when necessary, i.e., "Good stretch first baseman, but your foot came off the bag."

### **Dead Ball**

If a batted ball contacts the Coach Pitcher, it will be considered a dead ball and the batter-runner and any other runners will advance one base.

### **Defensive Shifts**

To ensure player safety and in order to teach the game's proper positions—to which shifts may be added later—significant defensive shifts are strongly discouraged.

### **Eight-Player Minimum; Ten-Minute Grace Period**

A team may start a game with a minimum of 8 players and insert others as they arrive. A ten-minute grace period will be permitted to allow teams to reach the eight-player minimum.

### **Infield Fly Rule**

The infield fly is not in effect in the Rookie League.

### **Must-Play Rule; Substitutions; Rotating Defense and Batting Order**

Free defensive substitutions: players may be taken in and out of the field lineup at any time. Each player **must** play at least 2 innings in the field. In order to teach the game to all players, no player should play the same position for more than 1 inning in a game. All efforts should be made to allocate playing time equitably. Once a batting order is established, it must be followed.

Catchers aside, a fair way to ensure that players receive equal instruction is to rotate your defense through programs that the League Coordinator will share with Managers. Batting orders should also flow from game to game—i.e., if the fifth batter makes the last out on Tuesday, the sixth batter leads off on Saturday.

### **Pitcher's Position**

The pitcher must be positioned within a 6' circle and behind the Coach Pitcher (on the right or left side) until the ball has been hit. This mark is 46 feet from home plate.

### **Protective Equipment**

The catcher will wear full equipment, including a protective cup. No exceptions. All batters and runners will wear a protective helmet.

### **Protests**

There are no protests under any circumstances.

### **Outfielders and Force Outs**

Outfielders must throw the ball to a base to record a force out. The coaches will declare a runner "safe" on whom an outfielder makes a play by running the ball to a base.

### **Ten Defensive Players**

Four outfielders will play for a total of 10 defensive players. All outfielders **must** be positioned in the outfield grass. Balls hit to the outfield should be thrown back to the infield.

### **Thrown Bats**

A batter that throws or slings a bat in a manner that may cause injury to another player may be given one warning, but otherwise is out.

### **Uniforms**

Players and coaches are required to wear their jersey and hat in the games, but all may wear additional clothing for comfort's sake, i.e., a sweatshirt or other pullover. Baseball pants or cleats are not required; players' comfort is paramount in the Rookie league.

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## **6 Year Old Rookie [Tee-Ball / Coach Pitch] Guidelines - 2021**

*The following guidelines intend to help parents, coaches, and umpires emphasize safety and teamwork while providing a learning environment in which all players can participate.*

### **Coach Pitching**

Our priority in the Rookie league is to make players comfortable hitting pitched balls. Coaches should attempt to deliver pitches in the strike zone that batters can handle; an underhand “soft-toss” may be a good approach to begin the season for most batters. Coaches may pitch underhand or overhand.

While coaches should pitch from the vicinity of the pitching mound, they should make certain that the defensive team’s pitcher does not position him- or herself in front of the pitcher’s plate, for safety reasons. It is a good practice for coaches to make sure that the defensive team is ready before pitching to a new batter.

Any pitch thrown by the coach counts as one of the batter’s five pitches; after five pitches the tee will be used. To keep the game moving, teams should task a coach with being ready to quickly bring the tee forward after a fifth pitch and to remove it after a batter has completed his at bat.

### **Clean-Up**

PLEASE, PLEASE, PLEASE pick up trash in dugouts and around the field after every game!

### **Coaches**

Each team will have one manager and three “official” assistant coaches. However, involving as many assistant coaches as possible adds to our instruction and makes parents a part of their child’s success. It is paramount to set a good example as coaches and role models. Coaches are responsible for the behavior of their team’s parents; if parent behavior in any way detracts from the players’ or other parents’ experience the Manager should address it directly and speak with the League Coordinator if necessary.

### **Coaching at Practice**

Break up kids into small groups at practice and rotate through drills. Stress fundamentals. Teach, teach, and teach!

### **Coaching in the Field**

A coach may position a batter in the batter’s box or on the playing field. Be aware of player safety in positioning players on the field. The defensive team may have two coaches in the shallow outfield in addition to the assistant coach who is working with the team’s catcher. Defensive coaches are not permitted in the infield.

As the season begins, some players may not be prepared to play every position; however, this is an opportunity to help them get comfortable with the position, not to limit them to playing in the outfield, for example. Stress outfield fundamentals, including throwing the ball back into the infield, not running it in. Teach players how and when to cover bases: Collisions can occur when there is not a play at a base, yet a defensive player stands on the base.

### **Equipment**

Keep up and maintain team equipment through the season. Call the coordinator should any equipment break or get lost. Likewise, e-mail, text, or call the league coordinator regarding any found equipment.

### **Lightning**

If lightning is detected within 6 miles of the field by the umpire, play will be suspended. This follows the “Flash-Bang” method recommended by the National Severe Storms Laboratory where the observer begins counting when a lightning flash is sighted. Counting is stopped when the associated bang (thunder) is heard. Divide this count by 5 to determine the distance to the lightning flash (in miles). For example, a flash-to-bang count of 30 seconds equates to a distance of 6 miles. This is also the basis for the 30/30 rule, which requires that games be suspended when the flash-to-bang count is less than 30 seconds (6 miles) and play is only resumed after 30 minutes following the last lightning strike.

In all other instances (including practices), coaches are urged to utilize good judgment with an emphasis on safety.

### **Passed Balls**

The defensive coach assisting catchers should stand at the backstop to help retrieve passed balls.

### **Rain-Outs and Rescheduled Games**

Rained out games will be postponed by League Officials **ONLY- NOT** by team head coaches. To find out if a scheduled game has been postponed for rain, call 220-1530 (**league phone**) after 4 p.m. on weekdays and anytime on weekends. Make-up games are usually Friday nights and Sunday. The league commissioner will notify head coaches of rescheduled game times.

### **Scorekeeping**

The league is instructional. **No official scoring will be kept.**