

Shakopee Youth Baseball Playing Time/Philosophy (for Metro Traveling Teams)

Shakopee League (in-house) playing time philosophy can be found in each league's rules.

Metro 10's and 11's Traveling Teams:

- All teams will play a *minimum* of 26 games during the season (16 league games, 9 tourney games, and 1 playoff game - we have had teams play close to 50 games, depending on how they do in tourneys and playoffs), all players must have a minimum of 8 games at an infield and outfield position by the end of the season (minimum of 3 defensive innings for infield and 2 innings for outfield played in those 8 games).
 - Pitching and /or catching count as an infield position.
 - Most of this can be accomplished early in the season or after longer weekend tourneys/tourneys that have already been decided (game #3).
 - All players must sit defensively a minimum of 8 innings during the season
- There is continuous batting in league and tournament play (all players bat).
 - All players should be given the opportunity to bat for a minimum of five games over the course of the season in the top, middle, and bottom 1/3 of the batting order.
 - Most of this can be accomplished early in the season or after longer weekend tourneys/tourneys that have already been decided (game #3).
- Tournament play (qualifiers, state, and league playoffs) are considered “more important” than League games. Therefore, coaches may approach tournaments as necessary to compete at the team's highest level.
 - The only restrictions in tournament play are pitching innings (as dictated by the tournament rules) and defensively, each player will play a minimum of 3 innings (in a complete game) and coaches are encouraged not to sit a player for two innings in a row.
 - Coaches are encouraged to seek various playing time opportunities (IF/OF) in tournament play for all players, when possible.
- Each team should strive to develop at least two quality catchers and six reliable pitchers throughout the season.
 - Also, any player wishing to pitch that has proven he can throw a minimum of 6 of 10 strikes in practice, should be allowed to pitch a minimum of 5 innings during the season (one pitch in an inning, by rule, constitutes an inning pitched.) This “tryout” should be given weekly, as needed/requested. Remember, at this age, we want to encourage EVERYONE to pitch. AAA coaches especially need to be aware that most of their players will have the potential to pitch and need to be encouraged/developed throughout the year. Don't rely on the same 2-3 kids all the time in pressure situations . . . keep encouraging and giving opportunities as best/reasonably as you can.
 - Catchers should be determined by desire and ability shown in practice (all interested should be given a game opportunity). Catchers need to be able to receive/block and throw at this level.

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Metro 12's and 13's Traveling Teams:

- All teams will play a *minimum* of 26 games during the season (16 league games, 9 tourney games, and 1 playoff game - we have had teams play close to 50 games, depending on how they do in tournaments and playoffs), all players must have a minimum of 5 games at an infield and outfield position by the end of the season (minimum of 3 defensive innings for infield and 2 innings for outfield played in those 5 games).
 - Pitching and /or catching count as an infield position.
 - Most of this can be accomplished early in the season or after longer weekend tournaments/tournaments that have already been decided (game #3).
 - All players must sit defensively a minimum of 5 innings during the season
- There is continuous batting in league and tournament play (all players bat).
 - All players should be given the opportunity to bat for a minimum of five games over the course of the season in the top, middle, and bottom 1/3 of the batting order.
 - Most of this can be accomplished early in the season or after longer weekend tournaments/tournaments that have already been decided (game #3).
- Tournament play (qualifiers, state, and league playoffs) are considered “more important” than League games. Therefore, coaches may approach tournaments as necessary to compete at the team's highest level.
 - The only restrictions in tournament play are pitching innings (as dictated by the tournament rules) and defensively, each player will play a minimum of 3 innings (in a complete game) and coaches are encouraged not to sit a player for two innings in a row.
 - Coaches are encouraged to seek various playing time opportunities (IF/OF) in tournament play for all players, when possible.
- Each team should strive to develop at least two quality catchers and six reliable pitchers throughout the season.
 - Also, any player wishing to pitch that has proven he can throw a minimum of 6 of 10 strikes in practice, should be allowed to pitch a minimum of 5 innings during the season (one pitch in an inning, by rule, constitutes an inning pitched.) This “tryout” should be given weekly, as needed/requested. Remember, at this age, we want to encourage EVERYONE to pitch. AAA coaches especially need to be aware that most of their players will have the potential to pitch and need to be encouraged/developed throughout the year. Don't rely on the same 2-3 kids all the time in pressure situations . . . keep encouraging and giving opportunities as best/reasonably as you can.
 - Catchers should be determined by desire and ability shown in practice (all interested should be given a game opportunity). Catchers need to be able to receive/block and throw at this level.

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Metro 14's and 15's:

- Parents, players and coaches need to understand that the rules change at age 14.
 - Coaches no longer have the flexibility of continuous batting or unlimited defensive substitutions.
 - Coaches are now restricted by the “real rules” of baseball (only 9 players play/bat at a time, only starters may re-enter the game, designated hitter option may be available and how this all affects legal substitutions, etc.).
- Better players are going to receive more playing time than others. This is the coaches’ discretion.
- Coaches are encouraged to seek various playing time opportunities for all players and reward positive attitudes/attendance/work ethic, when possible.
- League play should provide some flexibility for playing time and possibly experimenting with the line-up.
- Coaches should do their best to ensure that all players either get an at-bat, or play at least two innings defensively in every league game.
- Courtesy runners for the pitcher and catcher, when available, should also be considered an important role at this level; this opportunity should be used to enhance a faster bench player’s base-running abilities and keep all players involved.
- Tournament play (qualifiers, state, and league playoffs) are considered “more important” than League games. Therefore, coaches may approach tournaments as necessary to compete at the team’s highest level.
- Each team should strive to develop at least two quality catchers and six reliable pitchers throughout the season.
 - Also, any player wishing to pitch that has proven he can throw a minimum of 6 of 10 strikes in practice, should be allowed to pitch a minimum of 5 innings during the season (one pitch in an inning, by rule, constitutes an inning pitched.) Coaches should not rely on the same 2-3 kids all the time in pressure situations . . . keep encouraging and giving opportunities as best/reasonably as you can.
 - Catchers should be determined by desire and ability shown in practice (all interested should be given a game opportunity). Catchers need to be able to receive/block and throw at this level.

16-18's Leagues:

- Again, “real rules” of baseball are used at these levels, making it more difficult for game substitutions.
- Certain players are going to receive more playing time than others.
- Coaches should do their best to ensure that all players either get an at-bat or play at least two innings defensively in every league game.
- Courtesy runners should also be considered an important role at this level; this opportunity should be used to enhance a faster bench player’s base-running abilities.
- Coaches are encouraged to seek various playing time opportunities for all players and reward positive attitudes/attendance/work ethic, when possible.