

# AYLMER PIRATES



## T-Ball Parent Guide

Rev: January 26, 2017

## Introduction

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Welcome to Aylmer Minor Baseball's T-Ball program. AMBA's T-Ball program continues to develop the skills introduced in BlastBall such as hitting throwing and catching and introduces new skill such as base running and fielding. As participants become more proficient at hitting from a baseball tee they will be further challenged by being coach pitched or machine pitched. Teams are kept to 8-10 players to allow for more repetitions during practice and games which should lead to an improvement in individual skills. AMBA's T-Ball program has main four goals::

1. Create an environment in which children and adults can have fun with baseball.
2. Teach baseball skills, rules and strategy to our players.
3. Model and teach competitiveness with an emphasis on good sportsmanship.
4. Promote increased self-esteem among children.

Each T-Ball session will be 55 minutes in length and consist of practice time and game time. The first session will consist entirely of practice time in order to teach the participants the basic skills of the game. Subsequent sessions will consist of an increase in game time and a decrease in practice time dependant on how proficient the participants become in the basic skills.

## Equipment

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The following materials will be available at the diamond for each coach prior to each session:

- Tee ball bats
- Hitting tee's
- Base Sets
- 9" tee-balls
- Tennis balls
- Wiffle balls
- Assorted other training materials

## The Game Rules

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The following rules and guidelines should be followed during game play.

### Protective Equipment:

- All batters and base runners must wear helmets at all times.
- Players in the pitching and catchers position must at all times wear a helmet with a protective face mask.
- No metal cleats are allowed
- All fielders will wear a baseball glove

### Batting

- Scores are not kept in T-Ball
- One coach should be helping batters and placing the ball on the tee. A second coach should organize the players on the bench into the batting order and ensure they are not in the batting area.
- All players in the line-up will bat once each inning. The last batter position must be rotated through the batting order. The first batter of the previous inning moves to the last batter position and the second batter in the previous inning moves to the first batter position.
- Every child will be allowed to play, no matter how late he or she arrives at the game. Late players must be placed on the bottom of the batting order.
- The batting coach is responsible for removing the batting tee from the playing area when the play nears home plate.
- The batter will decide whether he/she will hit off the T or coach pitched. If a batter chooses to hit off the tee, he/she will be allowed as many swings as it takes to put the ball in play. If the batter chooses coach pitch, they will receive 4 good pitches. If they have not hit the ball into play after 4 pitches they will then be allowed to hit off the tee.
- No bunts are allowed

### Base Running

- No base stealing is allowed
- No lead-offs are allowed
- There will be no extra base awarded when a throw to 1st base goes out of play.
- Batters must return to their team bench after being called out.
- When the pitcher fields a hit, he/she must make a throw in order to make an out (tagging is not allowed)
- Infield hit (inside baselines), base runner/batter advance one base only regardless of hit.
- Outfield hit (outside baselines) base runner/batter may advance until ball has returned to infield (inside baselines), at which time the defensive player must have possession of the ball to stop play. Runners  $\frac{1}{2}$  way between bases will be awarded the next empty base.

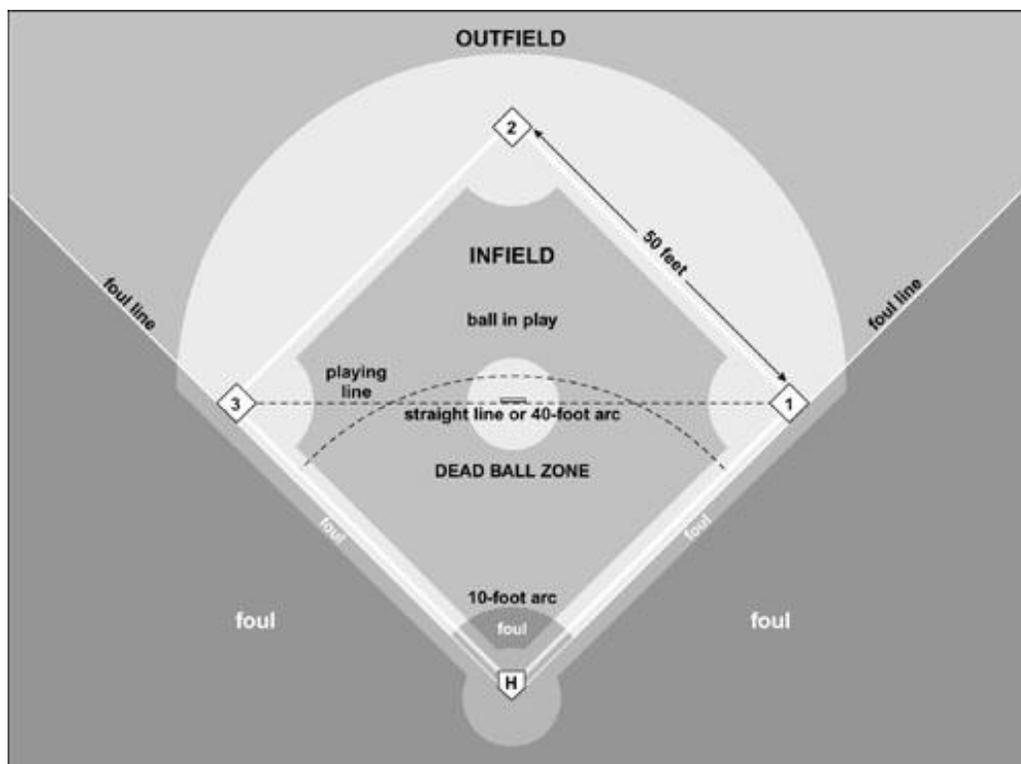
## Fielding

- Two fielding coaches are allowed on the field to assist fielders. These coaches should also help direct the base runners.
- Each team will field all players in attendance.
- Players should be rotated through all fielding positions.
- For safety, at the discretion of the coach, first year or inexperienced players do not have to play an infield position they are not competent enough or comfortable playing such as pitcher, catcher or first base.
- An inning is completed once the entire hitting team has hit once and "Last Batter" has been called. Once the last hitter has hit the ball into play, the inning is over once the fielding team throws the ball to the catcher who must then step on the plate to end play.
- An out is made by throwing the ball to the base ahead of the runner or by tagging the runner.

## Field Setup

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The playing field shall be setup the field as shown in the pictorial below. The bases will be set at a distance of 50 feet. An arc 10 feet out from home plate shall be designated as foul ball territory. The ball must be re-hit if it comes to rest inside this arc. A playing line between 1<sup>st</sup> base and 3<sup>rd</sup> base shall indicate the dead ball zone. All players must be positioned outside the dead ball zone until the ball is hit into play. If the pitching machine is in use a 8 foot diameter shall be drawn around the machine. This is a dead ball zone. Absolutely no players shall enter this zone at any time. Only coaches shall operate the pitching machine. The pitching machine shall be set a distance of 40 feet from home plate and the speed set at 20mph (lowest speed setting).



## Tips and Fundamentals

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### Hitting Fundamentals

- Proper stance adjacent to batting tee to include balanced, athletic position (feet shoulder width apart, back straight, and bent slightly at waist with butt out). Hands holding the bat should be together (not spaced) and above shoulder. Be sure to have players stand back to be able to extend arms as the tendency at this age is to stand too close to the tee.
- Swing in balance without spinning around, starting with the weight back. Follow through over opposite shoulder. Do not let the bat go.
- The use of a timing step is too advanced at this age and players do better if they learn to swing in balance.

### Catching and Fielding Fundamentals

- Balls thrown above the waist should be caught with thumbs together.
- Balls thrown below the waist should be caught with the pinkies together.
- Ground balls should be fielded with 2 hands either in the “alligator” position or with pinkies together with palms up starting with hand(s) on the ground.
- Once a ball is fielded the player should turn their body so their non-throwing shoulder faces the direction they are aiming to throw and then make the throw.

### Throwing Fundamentals

- Grip ball along the seam with two or three fingers along with the thumb.
- Point shoulder to target when setting up to throw.
- Throwing arm should start along the side parallel with the leg and rotate backwards to be even or above the height of the shoulder.
- Step with leg opposite the throwing arm toward target when throwing.
- Follow-through to opposite pocket when throwing.
- See “the wheel” as described in the Rally Cap package.

### Base Running Fundamentals

- After hitting the ball, lay bat down – do not throw bat!
- Run directly to the base.
- Step on the base.
- Run through first base. Try to teach players to turn to the right if the play is close or turn to the left if there is a chance to go for second base.

Remember to keep the fundamentals fun, basic and simple after all, the key to Baseball is learning by doing!

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