

# Eagan Baseball In-House Formats

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This document is intended to explain the game play and practice goals for Eagan Baseball's In-House levels Rookies, Mites, & Squirts II. The primary focus of this is to explain the formats and rules that will be put into place at each level. The goal is to provide Eagan Baseball with a solid program that will both allow the growth of Eagan Baseball through enjoyment and love of the game as well as building a strong foundation of skills that will drive and develop as the kids move onto high levels and possibly into Travel and High School ball.

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## Rookies

**Age:** Pre-Kindergarten / Kindergarten (Tee-Ball)

**Goal:** The focus of this level is to have fun and teach basic baseball skills to the kids. Practices and games should be laid back with the primary focus of teaching the skills needed as they move forward and trying to ingrain a love of the game.

**Practice:** These should be fun and filled with mini games and drills to teach basic skills needed to build on as they move up levels. Things like “ready positions” when fielding, correct batting mechanics, and how to run bases. Try to find a good mix of basic drills and fun games to teach those skills for practices. Also as the season moves along feel free to start working on some of the aspects that will be needed next year with things like coach pitch

**Game Type:** Batters will hit off the Tee and runs to first base. Runners advance one base a time but may take an extra base if the ball has not been fielded by the time he reaches their base (ex. Hit to the outfield). **NO** advancing on overthrows. Outs are not recorded but they should be acknowledged. However the player getting out **does not** come off base (We want to focus on base running). Each inning the whole batting order will hit with the last in the order being the home run hitter. No score is kept

**Length:** The game will consist of at least four (4) or six (6) complete innings in which 1/2 of the players for the batting lineup will bat. There is a 1hr 15m time limit from the start of the game. You may play more than 4 innings, but no inning may begin after the time limit. **Note:** Make sure to get in an even number of innings so all kids get equal at-bats.

**Fielding:** Players should be rotated to new positions each inning – each player should play both infield and outfield positions each game. There should be no more than five players in the infield – using traditional infield positions of pitcher, 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and shortstop. Those not playing infield positions should be arranged equally in the outfield. (**No catcher**, have another coach/parent help if need)

**Field Info:** Base Length ~50ft

## Mites

**Age:** Kindergarten /1<sup>st</sup> Grade (Coach Pitch / Tee-Ball)

**Goal:** The focus of this level should be to continue to build on the skills learned during the Rookies level. As with the Rookie level practices and games should be laid back with the primary focus of teaching the skills they need as they move to higher levels.

**Practice:** These should be fun and filled with mini games and drills to teach basic skills needed to build on as they move up levels. Things like “ready positions” when fielding, correct batting mechanics, and how to run bases. Try to find a good mix of basic drills and fun games to teach those skills.

**Game Type:** Batter is given 5 good underhand pitches from the coach. After 5 pitches if he has not hit the ball, then the Tee will be used. This rule should be followed closely to allow for movement in the game. When the ball is hit, the batter runs to first. Fielders should be encouraged to throw the ball to any base to which a runner is advancing. Runners advance one base a time but may take an extra base if the ball has not been fielded by the time he reaches their base. **NO** advancing on overthrows. Outs are recorded (the player getting out comes off the base) but the inning does not end until ½ the batting order has batted in that inning (or full roster depending on which direction you are playing). No “home run hitter” since outs now requires a player to come off the base. No score is kept.

**Length:** The game will consist of at least four (4) or six (6) complete innings in which 1/2 of the players for the batting lineup will bat. There is a 1hr 15m time limit from the start of the game. You may play more than 4 innings, but no inning may begin after the time limit. **Note:** Make sure to get in an even number of innings so all kids get equal at-bats.

**Fielding:** Players should be rotated to new positions each inning – each player should play both infield and outfield positions each game. There should be no more than five players in the infield – using traditional infield positions of pitcher, 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and shortstop. Those not playing infield positions should be arranged equally in the outfield. (**No catcher**, have another coach/parent help if need)

**Field Info:** Base Length ~50ft, Pitching Distance ~20ft

## Squirts II

**Age:** 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade (Coach/Kid Pitch)

**Goal:** The goal on Squirts II is to grow the skills needed but to also start building their in game. We will start putting more aspects of true game play in this year.

**Practice:** While you should still try to make practices fun and include games to keep the kids engaged there should be a greater focus on the skills portion. You should still incorporate the skills games we have been using to help drive home those skills. Base running is one of those that as they move into travel will become critical.

**Game Type:** For the first games in May please use 100% coach pitch to give kids a chance to strengthen their arms a little before pitching. Starting in June, kids will pitch and the count is kept. If the kid pitcher throws 4 balls or walks the batter, a coach will take over pitching to complete the at-bat. The hitter will then start with 1 strike and bat until he strikes out or puts the ball in play. There are no walks at this level. Runners may advance at their own risk within the bounds of the base running rule. Outs are recorded as normal. Bat until 3 outs are made, 5 runs scored, or the entire batting order has batted once in the inning. No base is awarded for hit by pitch. Pitchers can pitch a maximum of 2 innings per game and no more than 45 pitches.

**Base Running:** No leading off or stealing. Runners must remain on base until the ball is hit. Each team will receive only one warning per game. In the case of a warning, play stops, no runner may advance, and there is no pitch. After one team warning, a runner who leaves early shall be called out (Max of one (1) out per play). Runners may advance at their own risk until a batted ball is controlled by a defensive player in the infield and then must stop. Runners may advance two (2) bases from the start of the play on overthrows that go out of play.

**Fielding:** The defensive team will field a maximum of 9 players in the field (traditional baseball positions). We will be using catchers, however to help speed up the game the catcher isn't required to throw the balls back to the pitcher each pitch, you are also encouraged to have a coach help clean up the passed balls.

**Scoring:** Each team is limited to scoring 5 runs in each ½ inning. There is a 10-run rule in effect after 5 innings (4 ½ innings if the home team is ahead) - The losing team must have batted five times. For the final ½ inning of the game (either by length or time limit) the 5 run rule is suspended for each team.

**Length:** Complete games are considered to be six (6) innings (5 ½ if the home team is leading) or 1 hr 15m from the start of the game. If six innings have been completed within the time limit and the score is tied, extra innings may be played. But no inning may begin after the time limit. Because of this rule, games may end in a tie.

**Field Info:** Base Length 60ft, Pitching Distance ~40ft