



2023 TEE BALL GUIDELINES & DIVISION RULES

GAME PRELIMINARIES

1. The Home team is responsible for field preparation. The infield must be dragged, hitting mats placed at home plate, and the first and third baselines marked before each game/practice. A parent volunteer or volunteers should be assigned to this task for each home game, and this typically takes at least 15 minutes to complete with two people working. Bases should be secured, 50' apart, with the orange half of the safety base to the right side of the first base foul line.
2. After the diamond has been prepared, all equipment, such as screens to drag the field and chalk liners to mark the baselines and batter's boxes, must be returned to the equipment bins and the lid to the equipment bin must be closed during the game. You can leave the locks on the fence (up high where children won't remove them) while the game is played. Also remember to return the keys to the lockbox and secure the lockbox before the game starts, so you don't accidentally take the keys home with you. A coach or parent volunteer needs to unlock the porta-potty at the diamond and must lock it at the end of the game.
3. Before each practice/game, and after the field has been dragged, players on both teams should each pick up 5 to 10 rocks the size of a dime or larger. Rocks should be disposed of in the garbage bins near the player benches. This is as much to remove rocks as it is to instill a basic sense that diamond upkeep is the player's responsibility and not just for the parent volunteers to take care of for them. This is a core RMLL value and needs to be instilled at a young age.
4. ALL players must wear an athletic supporter or compression shorts and must provide their own batting helmet. RMLL does not provide any helmets. Players who forget their helmets will not be allowed to bat. Shorts are not permitted under any circumstances – all players must wear long pants.

PLAYING THE GAME

1. It is **mandatory** for both teams must practice for the first 30-45 minutes of every Rookie Ball Jr game. Teams should split practice time on the infield and outfield.
2. Defensive players will take the infield positions (P, 1B, 2B, SS and 3B). **The pitcher is required to wear a helmet. There is no catcher and outfielders in Tee Ball.** Coaches and volunteer parents may be in the field to help position players.
3. Additional defensive players will practice with a coach in the outfield. This is a great time to do teach a skill (throwing, running, hitting or catching).
4. All players should rotate through all defensive positions and outfield practice on an inning-by-inning basis.
5. Players not actively involved in the game must be sitting on the bench All players should have their helmets on. Coaches can choose to load the bases at the start of each inning with the last 3 batters in the lineup.
6. **There is no on deck area permitted under Little League rules**, and bats should not be in the hands of any player other than the batter at the plate. Two parent volunteers should assist in addition to the coaches, who will be on the field; one to keep the players on the bench organized and safe, and a second to handle bats as one player leaves the bench to bat and other players return from home plate.
7. All players on the offensive team shall bat each inning.
8. A hit is considered a ball that lands in front of the hitting tee and remains within the baselines until it crosses first or third base. Use your judgement here, if the ball barely makes it off the Tee you can call time and try again.
9. Base runners may only advance on a batted ball and not on an overthrow. On hits contained in the infield runners may advance one base only.
10. The exception to (9) above is when the last batter is up. On a hit by the last batter, baserunners should all proceed around the bases and touch home plate. The last batter must be declared to the defensive team immediately prior to his/her turn at bat, and the defensive team should let all baserunners score before leaving the field to their bench.
11. There are no lead offs allowed. Players may not run until the bat contacts the ball.
12. Base runners struck by a hit ball will continue to advance to the next base. Please teach your players to if this was to occur at an older age they would be out.
13. There is no infield fly rule.

14. All batters and base runners must wear protective helmets.
15. Play shall not start until the batting team's coach calls "play ball" or "ready" prior to each swing of the bat.
16. Defensive players should be encouraged to throw the ball overhand to make a play on every hit ball. At the Tee Ball level, coaches should teach players to field and throw the ball to first base.
17. If there is an injury during a game or practice, a Little League Injury Report must be completed and submitted to the safety director within 24 hours of the injury. Forms are on the RMLL website on the Documents/Rules page.
18. While it is important for the players to strive to play well, it is more important that the adults keep the game fun, safe and instructive for all players involved. Scores are not kept and coaches should let players continue to run the bases even if they are called out on a play. The role of the coaches is to develop the baseball skills and knowledge of all the participants in the game, and to encourage and demonstrate good sportsmanship.

ENDING THE GAME

1. Teams should be playing ball for about 75 minutes unless weather conditions dictate otherwise. As the season progresses, you should try to play more innings if the kids are having fun. All games should be complete by 8:00 p.m.
2. All games will be a maximum of six (6) innings with no innings to start after 7:45 p.m. Use common sense – if it is cold and/or the kids are tired and not "with it" anymore, you may wish to quit a bit earlier.
3. If lightning is observed in the area, the game must be cancelled, and all equipment and gear should be put away immediately. All players and adults should leave the area to ensure safety.
4. Teams should have a cheer for their opponents and should line up along the first base and third base line and shake hands or tip their cap to the other team. Finally, coaches and players should have team meeting.

COACHING SUGGESTIONS:

1. For the first two scheduled games, we suggest that you practice with your own team for the entire session. Focus on holding the bat, foot position behind the Tee, and dropping (not throwing) the bat as they run to first base, along with ready position and fielding/throwing drills on defense. Share the infield with the other team (teams switch halfway through).
2. By the second week teams should be ready to play a regular T-Ball game, but it is **mandatory that the first 30 minutes of the scheduled time is dedicated to individual team practice drills.** Share the infield as necessary with the other team depending on what drills you plan to run that evening. Proper first base play should be a focus of most pre-game practice sessions until the players demonstrate that they grasp the important points.
3. Split your team into two groups when you are playing defense. One group will play defense (P, 1B, 2B, SS and 3B) while the other team bats. The second group will work on drills in the outfield grass. Focus on drills to teach running, throwing, catching and fielding ground balls. This is a much more effective use of time and provides all players with a chance to play an infield position one inning and to get lots of repetitions the next inning.
4. Coaches and parents should quietly correct the players immediately after a play. Keep them aware of what they should do if the ball comes to them. First base needs extra attention, with a parent or coach closely guiding the defensive player in all games to keep them aware of the play and to maintain safety for both the batter-runner and first baseman. Coaches should a pylon at each position, so players know where to stand for their specific position. Correct the players natural urge to all run to the ball wherever it is hit. Teach the “position” concept and don’t put all defensive players in a semi-circle across the infield.
5. Until they have a better idea of what they are doing, instruct the players to throw to first base on every play. This probably means for the entire Tee Ball season.
6. Split your team into two groups when you are playing defense. One group will play defense (P, 1B, 2B, SS and 3B) while the other team bats. The second group will work on drills in the outfield grass. Focus on drills to teach running, throwing, catching and fielding ground balls. This is a much more effective use of time and provides all players with a chance to play an infield position one inning and to get lots of repetitions the next inning.
7. A coach should help each batter set up, and coaches or volunteer parents at first and third base are required. Ensure players running the bases are in the “ready” position and “face the base they came from.” Do not allow “sprinter” positions when running the bases, as we are trying to teach kids at a young age to play the game the right way.

8. Keep it fun. Let the players decide the outcome of the game by their play. Make note of areas to work on for your next practice, but don't try to fix everything in a game.

9. At some point in June, you may want to try to start having some coach pitch innings. You may wish to have one inning of coach-pitch per game in June, for example, and it is recommended that you use a Blast Ball and have the batter use a tennis racket at first. Pitching should be a short underhand toss (not too high, keep it flat). This is only applicable if you think they kids are ready for it. It is not a problem to continue to hit off the Tee all season, and some kids will struggle when trying to hit a pitched ball with a bat at this age.

10. Instead of a rotating snack schedule, ask each parent to provide a snack and drink for their own child. Be aware of allergies and keep it nut free. Also remind parents that they are responsible for insect repellent, sunscreen and any other items their child requires for comfort.

11. Parents are not permitted to leave the field unless another parent agrees to watch their child (the coach is not able to stop the entire game if a child has a minor injury or has to use the bathroom, for example).

POST-GAME FIELD CHECKLIST

Following the game, the items below must be completed by parent volunteers and coaches:

1. Rake the home plate area to ensure it is smooth and any holes have been filled in properly.
2. Return all equipment, bases, etc. to the equipment bin – keep the bin neat and clean for the next team.
3. Ensure that the equipment bin is locked (2 locks) and the keys are returned to the lock box.
4. Secure/close the lock box and clear the combination/code.
5. Lock the porta-potty after checking to see that nobody is still inside.