

MINI MINOR DIVISION

This division, formerly known as T-Ball Grade 1, introduces players to more basic concepts of the game. It is a step up from T-Ball, as the pitching machine is used, however as this may be some player's first introduction to the game, accommodations will be made to allow for their development as well. The goal is for players to be ready for Minor B next season, which has longer games, as well as new rules such as "outs".

The primary goals for this Division are teaching baseball skills. Having fun and demonstrating sportsmanship is much more important than the score at the end of the game. In fact, no score is kept.

RULES

- For the first half of the season the ball will be coach pitched. Once a coach feels their team is ready, they will graduate to the pitching machine. The goal is to have players comfortable hitting from the pitching machine by the end of the season.
- The ball will be pitched 3 times by the coach/pitching machine. If the batter does not hit one of these 3 good pitches, a tee will be provided and the batter will have 3 chances to hit the ball off the tee.
- After 6 unsuccessful attempts (3 off the coach pitch/pitching machine and 3 off the tee) the batter returns to the bench. There are no official "outs" and no "walks".
- Batters run one base at a time (station to station).
- The 1-inning scrimmages end after the last batter has chance to hit.
- All players play defensively and hit.
- Maximum of 7 fielders in infield positions: Catcher, Pitcher, First Base, Second Base, Short Stop, Third Base and an extra Short Stop is between 1st and 2nd base. Players should be rotated through the various positions so each player has a chance to develop across all positions.
- Infielders are not to be positioned nearer to the plate than 3 feet from the base paths between 1st & 2nd and 2nd and 3rd.
- The catcher must be positioned near the backstop fences while the opposing players are hitting.
- All other defensive players must be in the outfield.
- Fielders are not to block the base runner's progress by standing on the base paths.
- One coach is required to run the pitching machine. One coach is permitted in the outfield.

- Each batter must bat each inning and the last batter hits everyone home.
- All hitters and base runners must wear helmets.
- There is NO on deck circle in Little League due to safety reasons. No players other than the batter should be swinging bats during the game.
- The on deck hitter is to remain on the bench waiting for their turn to hit.
- All equipment should be kept in the bench area away from the field of play.
- Only coaches are to place the ball in the pitching machine or on the tee.
- Coaches should call a “defense ready” before instructing their batter to swing. Batters should not swing until instructed to do so by the coach.
- Batted balls must travel beyond 10 feet. Balls hit under 10 feet are considered foul and the batter is still up and re-hits.
- If a batted ball hits the pitching machine or the operator, the play will be considered dead. The runners will return to the base they were at prior to the pitch. The pitch will not count against the batters total.
- No bunting, stealing or infield fly rule. Runners shall not leave their bases until the ball crosses the plate or is hit.
 - Note: There is no sliding into 1st base except for sliding back to 1st base. Sliding is permitted at all other bases
 - Stealing is not allowed. Runners shall only leave bases after the ball is hit.
- Overthrows to 1st base or any other base. The game is being played station to station, so no base will be awarded for an over throw. Use this as a teaching moment or discuss later in practice.
- Scores and standings are not kept and there are no playoffs. The focus is on players having fun and developing baseball fundamentals.
- Rubber cleats are permitted – under no circumstances can metal cleats be used.

TIMING

There will be 3 teams at the Maple Grove South Diamond each evening. The teams will rotate between skills development in the outfield (between the North and South Diamonds) and a 1- inning scrimmage. The goal is to have all 3 teams play at least 1 scrimmage each evening.

For example:

5:45 – Players arrive and warm up with their coaches
6:00 - Team 1 vs. Team 2 = 1 inning (20 minutes), Team 3 practices in the outfield
6:20 - Team 2 vs. Team 3 = 1 inning (20 minutes), Team 1 practices in the outfield
6:40 - Team 3 vs. Team 1 = 1 inning (20 minutes), Team 2 practices in the outfield
7:00 – All teams participate in a base run

It will be important for the bench parents to actively help the players switch from the outfield to the playing field every 20 minutes and keep the batters in line on the bench. If the change-overs between scrimmages take too long, then the format may be switched to 2 scrimmages/evening, The coaches should use their discretion with this, taking into account the focus and energy of their teams.

With respect to Coach pitch vs. Machine pitch, the goal is to have the players all using machine pitch by the end of the year. Once in Minor B, Coach Pitch is not allowed. It is recommended that coaches move to pitching machines by May 1st – however, the primary goal at this level is ensuring we build confidence in the players and their ability to hit. We don't want a lack of confidence at the plate to carry forward. This is discretionary on the coach's part, keeping in mind that we want to wean the players off coach pitch and ideally have them used to the pitching machine by the end of the year.