

9U RULES / GUIDELINES

These are the basics: there will always be things that are missed or unclear.
Please speak to your convenor or any Board member for clarity.

- No umpires in the 9U division.
- All players MUST wear closed toed shoes, long pants, ball hats in the field and helmets when batting or playing the pitching position.
- Pitching machines are used for all games. No exceptions. The purpose is so that there is a progression for players: parent pitch in rally cap so they simply learn to connect with the ball, pitching machine in 9U to get used to a faster, consistent pitch to improve batting, then kid-pitch in 11U. Pitching machines also allow for more action as more balls are put into play, and helps to develop fielders and hitters.
- Pitches should be fairly fast (50-60 kph), and level, not lobbed. Set it at the best speed to allow players to hit the ball and adjust as necessary. Pitching distance must be 40' to 42' measured from the back of home plate.
- All batters in 9U receive "5 good pitches". Whichever coach is on the pitching machine is responsible for saying "no pitch" (in the dirt, for example) on unhittable pitches. Batters do not get to stand there until they hit. It's helpful for the coach to let the batter know when they only have one more pitch.
- NO strike outs. After a player has struck out or is out of good pitches they will hit off a TEE. Players hitting off a TEE may not advance past first on their hit.
- 9U teams should field **11 players**. If playing 11, you will have 4 outfielders and 2 "pitchers" – one on either side of the machine. Players in the "pitching" position are to wear their helmets in the field.
- No player is to sit more than once per game. A fair rotation is expected.
- Everybody bats – we do not play 3 OUTS. Each inning, the entire batting order gets up, regardless of whether or not they were in the field, and regardless of how many 'outs' there are. We do this so that the kids get batting practice every time – this is the most fun part for most kids this age, and we want them to have fun!! If the teams have different numbers of players (1 has 9, other has 11) it doesn't matter, it's ONCE through the batting order. The focus is on everyone batting, no on the score or having "fair" or even bats.

- When the last batter has hit the ball, everybody runs and the play is always to home. The catcher must have the ball in his or her possession and touch home plate to end the inning. All runs that come in before that happens are counted.
- There is no base stealing, bunting or infield fly rule in u9 ball.
- When the ball is hit into the outfield, it is declared 'dead' once it is thrown into the infield. All base runners must stop when the ball is back in the infield. If a base runner is past the halfway mark between bases, they may continue on to the next base. This includes home. The only exception to this rule is on the last batter, in which the catcher must possess the ball and tag home to end the inning.
- No third strike drop rule in u9. This doesn't come into play until u13.
- Batter or base runner is allowed 1 base on an overthrow/wild throw only, except for at third base. Players must be batted home - runners may not go home on an overthrow at third.
- The ball is declared dead if it hits the machine. Everyone advances one base.
- Games length is 6 innings or time. 9U games are allotted 90 minutes. Coaches should assess where they are at about 75 minutes to ensure that teams get even bats within the timeframe. Teams will not go late: this is not respectful of parent's time, or of any other team who may be waiting for their field time.
- During tournament play, if time is up and there hasn't been even bats, the score reverts back to the score at the end of the last complete inning.
- Field dimensions: base distance = 60ft, home to 2nd = 85ft 10inches, pitching machine to home plate = 40-42ft.
- Bats: only metal bats are to be used. Max bat length is 32", max bat diameter is 2 3/4". Players can bring bats from home to use, but please inspect them and make sure they meet these criteria.
- Rubber cleats are allowed ONLY. No metal cleats.
- 9U players (last year only) may be picked up to play with the 11U, with permission of their parents and coaches. Players may NOT miss their regular team game to be picked up. If picked up, 9U players follow **may NOT pitch and MUST bat at the bottom of the order.**
- **Playoffs:** All teams make the playoffs. Playoff schedule and structure will be determined by the Scheduling Manager based on the number of teams in the division. If teams are tied in the standing, ties will be broken based on these comparisons, applied in this order: **(1)** Head to head wins with tied teams; **(2)** Most wins in the season; **(3)** Head to head run differential (runs for minus runs against); **(4)** Season run differential, all games; **(5)** Coin flip. Work through the list until the

tie is broken. Playoff games are 5 innings with no time limit. If tied after 5 innings, the game will go into extra innings with the home team always getting a last chance to bat.