

BRANSON PARKS AND RECREATION  
**U8 Recreational League– Coach Pitch –Youth Baseball & Softball – Specific League Rules**

- NUMBER OF INNINGS PLAYED: 5
- TIME LIMIT: 55 minutes
- PITCHING OUTS: NONE (Adults pitch to their own batters)
- MINIMUM REGULATION GAME: 3 innings / 30 minutes
- NUMBER OF DEFENSIVE PLAYERS: 10
- MAXIMUM RUNS PER INNING: 5
  - When the game reaches a point where the losing team has no chance to at least tie the score (due to five-runs-per-inning limit) the game will end.
  - Example: 7 runs after 4 innings, 13 runs after 3 innings

**BASE RUNNING**

- Leading off and stealing is not allowed. Base runners must remain on base until the ball is batted into play by the batter.

**BATTING**

- A coach pitches to his/her own batters.
- Each batter is allowed 5 pitches to put the ball into fair play.
  - No balls or strikes are called.
  - If the batter fails to hit a fair ball in five pitches, he/she is out.
  - The umpire will keep track of the 5 pitch count limit.
- The infield fly rule is NOT in effect.
- A batter hit by a pitched ball will NOT be awarded first base.
- If a player cannot take his turn at bat due to illness, injury, ejection, etc. his/her spot will be skipped. The next batter in the lineup will bat. NO AUTOMATIC OUTS WILL BE ASSESSED IN THIS SITUATION.
- The batting order consists of all eligible players who are at the game, and stays the same throughout the game. There are no offensive substitutions.

**DEFENSIVE SUBSTITUTES, ETC.**

- 10 players will play defense.
- The defensive team must have no more than 5 infielders plus a catcher. The fielding pitcher must stand at a 35' mark on either side of the pitching pitcher (coach).
- The pitching pitcher (coach) must not intentionally interfere with a live ball.
- An adult may stand behind the plate, at the backstop, to retrieve passed balls.
- Coaches may NOT be on the infield with their teams while on defense.

**TIME LIMIT**

- No new inning shall begin with 10 minutes remaining in the game

**COACHES**

- The offensive team may have three coaches on the field while on offense. The pitcher, first base coach, and the third base coach.
- The defensive team may have three coaches on the field while on defense. The catcher, a coach at the edge of the first base line grass, and a coach at the edge of the third base line grass. Defensive coaches may not pass the fair/foul line to coach their team. Strictly enforced!

BRANSON PARKS AND RECREATION  
**U8 City League – Coach Pitch –Youth Baseball & Softball**

The Branson Parks and Recreation Youth Baseball Leagues are governed by rules designed to meet the following goals:

1. All players will be given an opportunity to play each game.
2. Sportsmanship will be promoted by participation in the Branson Parks and Recreation Baseball Program.
3. Player's health and safety shall be promoted at all times.
4. All teams should be evenly matched.

**A. AGE**

1. Participants in the Coach Pitch League shall be those age 7 and 8 by May 1 of the current school year.
2. Players will be allowed to play up at the discretion of the parent or guardian. However, the Program Administrator reserves the right to move the player to their own age division if they believe it is in the best interest of the safety and development of the child.

**B. PLAYING FIELD**

1. The Coach Pitch diamond shall have 60 foot base lines.
2. The Coach Pitch pitching distance shall be 35 feet.
3. In the Coach Pitch, the distance from home plate to second base shall be 84 feet 10 inches.
4. On the Coach Pitch field, an arc will be drawn from foul line to foul line, 10' in front of home plate.
  - a. When the coach pitches, the area bordered by the arc, the foul lines, and the back point of home plate shall be considered foul territory. The arc itself is not in foul territory.

**C. THE GAME**

1. In all Coach Pitch games, a half-inning will end when any of the following occurs:
  - a. the batting team scores five runs in that half-inning
  - b. the defensive team records three outs
  - c. the batting team has batted all batters
2. A complete game in the Coach Pitch League shall consist of five innings, unless any of the following occur:
  - a. TIME LIMIT. The time limit shall be one hour and twenty minutes. No new inning shall begin with less than 10 minutes remaining.
    - The umpire will be official timekeeper for all games.
    - The time shall begin immediately following the manager's plate meeting.
  - a. REGULATION GAME. For the purposes of rescheduling games, a regulation game shall consist of at least 3 innings, or 2 ½ innings if the home team is ahead.
    - i. Any game that is stopped before becoming regulation will be replayed from the start.
    - ii. Branson Parks and Recreation staff will determine the date and time that the game will be rescheduled.
3. Number of players in the line-up:
  - a. 10 players will play defense.
    - i. A team is limited to a maximum of five infield players, plus a catcher.
    - ii. The fielding pitcher must be positioned directly adjacent to the pitching rubber at the time of the pitch.
    - iii. The catcher will assume the normal catching position behind the plate.
    - iv. Four players will be in the outfield.
      - 1) All outfield players must play behind the baseline and may not come into the infield to make a play.

- b. A team may play with as few as seven players without penalty only if there are absences. At least seven team members must be present at game time to play, or a forfeit will result.
- c. If a team has ten or less players, all must play unless there is an injury, ejection, or illness.
- d. If a team begins play with less than ten players, late arriving team members must be added to the end of the batting order. A late-arriving player (or players) shall assume their defensive positions during the first dead ball occurrence following his/their arrival. The umpire and scorekeeper must be notified.
  - i. The team designated by the schedule to be the home team shall be the official scorekeeper for the game. The official scorekeeper must use a regulation scorekeeping book and must keep track of the following:
    - 1) Count (balls, strikes, outs)
    - 2) Score of the game (5 runs per inning, run rule, etc.)
    - 3) Line up used by both teams.
      - a. COMMENT: The umpire's focus should always be on administering the rules of the game of baseball/softball. The scoreboard is not an official account of the score and should not be treated as such.
  - e. If, at any time during the game, less than seven team members are eligible and available to continue playing, the game will be forfeited by the team lacking the seven team members.
- 4. Pre-Game Warm-up Regulations:
  - a. No team will practice on the infield portion of the diamond after it has been prepared for play.
  - b. Between half innings, the defensive team will be allowed to utilize a warm-up ball.
  - c. There shall be one minute between innings.
- 5. TIE GAMES: If a regulation or complete game ends with the score tied, it will remain a tie.

#### **D. BATTING**

- 1. All team members who are eligible and able to participate will be included in the batting order. This batting order will stay the same for the entire game.
- 2. When a coach submits a line-up card to the umpire, all team members must be included. Players who are ineligible or unable to play (for whatever reason) must still be included along with a brief explanation of why (i.e.: injured, sick, vacation, etc.).
- 3. If a player is unable to take or to complete his turn at bat due to injury, ejection, etc. his spot in the order will be skipped. The next player in the line-up will bat. No penalty will be assessed to his team if he is unable to bat or to complete his turn at bat. Any bases run or outs made during an incomplete turn at bat are legal. (NOTE: This rule differs from the "batting out of turn" rule which is rule 6.07 in the official rules of Major League Baseball).
- 4. If a player who previously was unable to bat due to illness or injury is able to take his next or subsequent turn at bat, he will be reinstated in the batting order. The umpire and scorekeeper must be notified.
- 5. If an eligible player or players arrives late to the game, then he or they must be added to the end of the batting order. Such players will bat as their turns come up.
- 6. Each batter will have five pitches to put the ball into fair play.
  - a. A batter who does not put the ball in play after five pitches is counted as an out.
  - b. A batter hit by a pitched ball will not be awarded first base.
  - c. Bunting is not allowed.
    - i. NOTE: A foul ball that is legally caught by a fielder will be counted as an out. The batter is out.
- 7. All team members of the team at bat must remain behind the dugout screen or fence except the batter and the on-deck batter who must remain in the on-deck circle until it is his time to bat.
- 8. After hitting the ball or in attempting to do so, the batter will not be allowed to throw or toss the bat, intentionally or unintentionally, in any manner. A player who throws his bat will be out. The ball will be

dead. All base runners will return to the base last touched at the time of the pitch. The decision as to whether the bat is thrown or not will be made by the umpire as a judgment call.

#### **E. BASE RUNNING**

1. Leading off and stealing are not allowed in the Coach-Pitch league. Base runners must remain on the base until the ball is batted into play by the batter. Violation of this rule results in the base runner being called out. (This is considered a defensive put-out and will be counted as an out.)
2. OVERTHROWS
  - a. If a defensive overthrow remains alive and in play, the base runners may advance **one base** at their own risk.
  - b. If a defensive overthrow goes out of play, the “one plus one” rule applies. Each base runner is entitled to advance one base beyond the base they were going to at the time of the release of the throw.
3. When a dead ball has been called by the umpire, base runners less than half the distance between two bases must return to the base last touched. Base runners more than half the distance between two bases must advance to the next base beyond the one last touched at the time of the dead ball. Umpires judgment will determine which base a base runner must go to.
4. The following rules shall govern the “crash rule,” i.e.: the situation involving contact between fielders and base runners at any base including home.
  - a. A base runner is not required to slide at any time. However, if a fielder clearly has possession of the ball and is waiting for the base runner, then it is the responsibility of the base runner to avoid contact with the fielder. If contact is made, it must be in an attempt to slide.
  - b. A fielder cannot block the base or baseline without clear possession of the ball. When waiting for a thrown ball, the fielder (including the catcher) must be positioned out of the baseline. Straddling the base is not out of the baseline. A fielder can move toward the base runner only when in clear possession of the ball.
    - i. PENALTIES:
      1. If a base runner makes contact with a fielder in clear possession of the ball other than in an attempt to slide, an immediate dead ball will be called. The base runner will be called out. If the base runner deliberately contacts the fielder with great force, the base runner is subject to ejection in addition to being called out. All other base runners are returned to the last base touched at the time of the dead ball.
      2. If a fielder is blocking the baseline and does not have clear possession of the ball, any contact (other than deliberate contact by either player) shall be ruled obstruction; and bases shall be granted accordingly.
    - c. When the fielder, base runner, and ball arrive simultaneously at a base, the umpire will rule on any illegal or unnecessary contact that may occur. In any case, no player may initiate deliberate contact without being subject to penalties.

#### **F. DEFENSIVE PLAY**

1. The coach/parent who is pitching to his own batters shall be designated as the pitching pitcher. The defensive player who assumes the role as a fielder will be called the fielding pitcher.
2. The pitching pitcher must not make any deliberate attempt to field or interfere with a batted ball. PENALTY: The batter will be called out. Intentional interference is a judgment call made by the umpire.
3. A batted ball that strikes the pitching pitcher will be considered live and in play, and should be played as any other batted ball.
4. **After a batted ball is fair and in play, the umpire will call time when the ball is in possession of an infielder and, in the umpire’s judgment, all normal play has ceased. The umpire will determine whether**

base runners must advance or return to a base when time is called. Players may ask the umpire for a time-out, but only the umpire can determine when a time-out is officially declared. Umpires shall call time after every play!

- a. Teams attempting to take bases after normal play has stopped will have their player sent back to the previously occupied base.
5. When the defensive team is playing the ball, the pitching pitcher must not intentionally interfere with any live ball. PENALTY: The furthestmost base runner will be called out. Intentional interference is a judgment call by the umpire.
6. The defensive team may place an adult behind the plate, at the backstop, who can retrieve passed balls or wild pitches, and throw them back to the pitching pitcher. This adult must not interfere with any live ball in any way - PENALTY: The furthestmost base runner will be called out. This “adult catcher” is utilized only to save time and “wear and tear” on the catcher.
7. The defensive team may play 10 players in the field. Players who did not participate in the previous inning must participate in the current inning.