

APACHE JUNCTION PARKS AND RECREATION

COACH PITCH BASEBALL RULES, GUIDELINES, AND PHILOSOPHY

GENERAL

- ◆ Coaches will pitch to the players. The player will declare before the at-bat if they want the coach to throw overhand or underhand (coaches may help in the decision making process). Players will have six strikes (swings) to put the ball in play. After the 4th strike, the batter may use the Tee. Player has 2 attempts from the Tee. After the 6th strike the player is out.
- ◆ Every player in the order will bat, with the last batter attempting to get all the way around the bases without being put out.
- ◆ A rotating batting order will be used the entire season. Before the first league game, the coach will make one lineup and will use the same one throughout the league. The order will rotate from game to game. The purpose of this is to prevent coaches from using the same leadoff and ending hitter every game.
- ◆ All players will play defense with the additional players being placed in the outfield (right and left centerfield).
- ◆ All players will be assigned a defensive position each inning (even if a team has more than 10 players on a team.) Coaches are expected to rotate their defenses each inning, so every child gets the opportunity to experience playing all the positions.
- ◆ The team listed second on the schedule will be the home team, will bat second, and have the 3rd base dugout.
- ◆ Leading off and/or stealing is prohibited. Coaches should not call a runner out for leaving too early. They should explain proper base running skills and rules for coach pitch.
- ◆ All players on the hitting team with the exception of the current batter and the player in the on-deck circle must be in the dugout. Players who disregard the rule will be given a warning after the first offense and then will lose their opportunity to bat in the inning the infraction occurred or in the next inning, if the player has already hit. Coaches are expected to keep their dugouts under control (use a parent to assist in this).
- ◆ Scores and standings will not be kept in this league as we want this to continue to be a developmental league.

PLAYERS

- ◆ Each team's roster has approximately the same number of players. Each inning all players will bat and play defense.

TIMING

- ◆ Games will be 50 minutes in duration. We will not start a new inning with less than 10 minutes remaining. We will finish any inning which is still in progress once the time limit has expired. An airhorn (when available) will sound with 10 minutes left and again at the end of the time limit. When not available, staff will notify the coaches.
- ◆ Games will start at listed time. Please arrive at least 15 minutes early so your child may warm-up with their teammates and so the coach will know how many players are available to play.

EQUIPMENT

- ◆ Soft-core style baseballs will be the official ball of the league in order to build confidence and reduce injuries.
- ◆ Players may bring their own bats. Bats will also be provided for the teams. Players must provide their own gloves.
- ◆ T-Shirts will be distributed prior to the first game. All other clothing (hats, pants, shoes, baseball glove, etc.,) must be furnished by the parents. The pants do not have to be official baseball pants. Comfortable sweatpants will be sufficient. **Pants are mandatory in coach pitch.** Any player who is not properly dressed will not be allowed to play. Any type of soft-soled baseball shoe or tennis shoe will be acceptable as footwear. Metal cleats, sandals, open-toe shoes, dress shoes or boots will not be allowed.

COACH PITCH RULES (CONTINUED)

RULES OF PLAY

- ◆ General baseball rules apply for games.

- ◆ After making contact with a pitch, the batter should drop their bat before beginning to run. Coaches should try to recognize which players have trouble with this rule in practice and help them to drop the bat properly before league games start. Due to the danger to the opposing team's catcher and to players in the field, players who throw their bats will be automatically out. Any runners on base will return to their original bases.

- ◆ After 3 outs bases will be cleared but team will continue to bat.

- ◆ Sliding is allowed if the player can execute it properly. If a player does not know how to slide properly, do not have them slide. A player can be hurt seriously if they do not know how to slide properly and when to slide.

- ◆ Defensive players should be encouraged to throw to the proper bases in an effort to get the runner out. Also, work with outfielders on not holding the ball. Have them throw the ball to one of the infielders. Which infielder they throw to should depend on where the ball is hit. Also help them to not make unnecessary throws (i.e., throwing the ball to first when the runner is already at the base.)

PLEASE REMEMBER: We are attempting to develop a fun program which allows every child the opportunity to play. We want the children to enjoy themselves so they will continue in athletics and stay active. Fun is the main goal in a program for this age group. With everyone's cooperation and help, we can run a successful program.