

# 3<sup>rd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Grade Fall Baseball Rules

## 2023



The purpose of 3<sup>rd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Fall Ball League is to develop players and prepare them for the spring season of the upcoming year. Fall ball is not intended to be competitive. It is to be used as a learning experience to give the players a better understanding of the game of baseball.

- Games are up to 4 innings with no new innings after 55 minutes. An inning is 5 runs or three outs – whichever happens first. There will only be a 5 run max per inning. All runs batted in on the 5<sup>th</sup> run will count (could have 8 runs total in an inning).
- There are 9 defensive players on the field at a time. 3 outfielders 6 infielders including a catcher (must wear full equipment). Outfielders must be beyond the grass/dirt line. They may come in front of the grass/dirt line once a pitched ball is hit. No official scoring will be kept in fall ball.
- Distance between bases is 60 feet.
- No Bat restrictions. Bunting is permitted.
- Distance between Home plate & Pitching Mound is 46 feet.
- Base runners are NOT allowed to lead off. Once the ball crosses the plate the run can go to the next base.
- Runners can steal 2nd & 3rd base. Runners cannot steal home on a wild pitch, or a pitch that gets behind the catcher. The only time a runner can steal home is if the defensive player (catcher, pitcher, etc.) makes an attempt to throw out the runner on 3rd who may be taking a large lead.
- 3 pitched strikes batter is out.
- There is no Drop 3<sup>rd</sup> Strike – if you strike out you are out!
- **There are no walks.** If a batter receives 4 called balls, a coach will enter the game to pitch to his own team's batter. The coach gets to pitch a maximum or "four minus the number of strikes" pitches, or until the batter hits the ball, or strikes out.

Scenario:

Batter receives a count of 4 balls and 1 strike. Coach enters game and pitches maximum of 3 pitches. The first two pitches are called strikes—the batter is out, even though the 3<sup>rd</sup> pitch has not been thrown.

Batter receives a count of 4 balls and 0 strikes. Coach enters game and pitches maximum of 4 pitches. The coach throws 4 poor pitches that the child cannot hit—the batter is out.

Batter receives a count of 4 balls and 2 strikes. Coach enters game and pitches maximum of 2 pitches. The first pitch is hit for a single—the batter is on base!

Batter receives a count of 4 balls and 1 strike. Coach enters game and pitches maximum of 3 pitches. The first two pitches are balls, and the child hits the 3<sup>rd</sup> pitch foul. The batter receives another pitch until he either: hits the ball, strikes out, or receives another ball...i.e. a foul ball on the “last” pitch (no matter how many “last” pitches) results in another pitch to him.

- Each pitcher is limited to TWO Innings per week. (The point of Fall Ball is to develop and teach the kids how to pitch to each other.)
- If a batter is struck by a pitch they are awarded 1st base but may choose to continue batting. \*Coaches ultimately have the final decision on this matter for player's safety.
- If the batting team interferes with a live ball, the ball is dead. The batter is then out. And runners will go back to the last base obtained.
- A hit ball that touches a runner in fair territory, without being touched first by a fielder, that runner is out.
- Fielder/Runner interference is based off situation. A fielder must be given an opportunity to field the ball (if obstructed, the runner is out). If a runner is obstructed by a fielder in the baseline, or blocking the base. He is awarded the base he is going to.
- Time out may be requested but is ultimately a judgement call of the umpire.

**A reminder to all coaches & parents that this league is a development and learning league. We are playing these rules to help prepare our kids for the upcoming rule changes & age group adjustments.**