

Clearfield Recreation

Machine Pitch League Rules 2026

Game Format

- Each team roster may have a maximum of 12 players.
- We support equal playing time.
- Official score and standings will not be kept.
- There will not be any forfeits. Games will be played with all players present.
 - A team can play with less players or borrow some from the other team.
- Games last 4 innings or 1 hour, whichever comes first.
- No new innings begin after 50 minutes and the game is drop-dead (ends no matter what) at 1 hour.
- Home team (first team listed on the schedule) starts in the field; visiting team bats first.
- When a game is canceled due to inclement weather:
 - If one complete inning has been played, the game is considered complete and will not be rescheduled.
 - If less than one complete inning has been played, the game will be rescheduled and restarted from the beginning.
- Games can end in a tie.
- An inning ends when any one of the following occurs:
 - 3 outs are recorded (strikeouts do not count toward the 3 outs)
 - 5 runs are scored
- Practices
 - Practice dates will be listed on the game schedule.
- Participation
 - All players present bat in the lineup.
 - Batting order remains the same during the game but should rotate each game to give different players a chance to bat in different lineup positions.
 - Players arriving late are added to the bottom of the batting order.
- Substitutions
 - There can be 10 players on defense per inning. 9 if a catcher is not used.
 - The 10th player, or 9th if a catcher isn't used, must play in the outfield as a rover.
 - A player cannot sit out 2 consecutive innings or a 2nd inning before every other player on the team has sat out 1 inning.
 - Substitutions cannot be made in the middle of an inning (except for injuries).
 - Unlimited defensive substitutions are allowed between innings.
- Protests and Ejections
 - Rule violations (not judgment calls) must be brought to the umpire's attention before the next pitch.
 - If unresolved, the Nightly Supervisor makes the final ruling.

- Anyone ejected must leave the field/park immediately.
- Coaches are responsible for the behavior of their players and parents.
- Disruptive spectators, coaches, or players may be removed by the umpire or supervisor.
- One coach is allowed by 1st base in foul territory and by 3rd base in foul territory. All other coaches must remain in the dugout.
- Coaches under 18 must wear a helmet while in the coach's box.
- Each team is allowed one defensive conferences per inning.
- Time for an injured player or water breaks does not count as a conference, provided no instruction is given during water breaks.
- Only Clearfield Recreation employees may operate the pitching machine.
- Clearfield Recreation employees will manage home plate.
- Coaches of the pitching team are expected to pick up balls that go to the backstop and return them to the catcher or the pitcher.

Equipment/Field Size

- Bases will be 60 feet apart.
- Pitching machine distance will be 38 feet.
- Bats: 26"-29" bats will be provided.
- Ball: Level 1 tee balls must be used at all practices and games when the pitching machine is not in use. 9 inch machine pitch balls will be used at all games or when practicing with the pitching machine.
- The pitching machine speed will be set to 5-6.
- No metal cleats will be allowed on the field.
- Batters and base runners are required to wear batting helmets.
- Players not batting, on deck, base running, or on defense must remain in the dugout.
- All bats, helmets, and equipment must stay in the dugout to keep the field safe and clear.
- Hard casts or braces must be covered with a soft material.
- No jewelry shall be worn except religious or medical jewelry which must be taped down.
- Catchers must wear a catcher's helmet, chest protector, shin guards and a catcher's glove.
- A youth defensive pitcher will stand to the side of and one foot behind the pitching machine.

Defense (Fielding)

- Defensive players must stay in their positions until the ball is hit.
- There is no infield fly rule.
- There is no dropped third strike rule.
- If a thrown ball hits the pitching machine or the umpire:
 - Ball is dead and runners advance one base.

Offense (Batting/Running)

- Base runners must stay on base until the ball is hit (no leading off).

- Stealing is not allowed.
- Batting
 - No bunting or swinging bunts.
 - There are no walks. A batter is out by strikeout or being put out on a play.
 - Each batter receives 4 pitches.
 - ♣ On the 4th pitch, the batter/coach may choose to use a tee (even if the batter has swung and missed the first 3 pitches).
 - ♣ If they choose the machine on the 4th pitch and miss, it is a strikeout (strikeouts are called but will NOT count toward the 3 outs per inning).
 - The pitching machine will deliver either a “strike” or a “no pitch”.
 - ♣ The staff member operating the pitching machine determines whether a pitch is a strike or a no pitch.
 - If the player swings at a pitch that would have been a no pitch they will be given a reminder, any subsequent pitches will be called a strike.
- Base Running
 - If a runner is put out by a tag or a fielded out, the runner returns to the dugout and an out is recorded.
 - Runners may attempt to advance one base per overthrow (maximum of one overthrow per play).
 - Any attempted throw to the pitcher results in a dead ball; runners may not advance.
 - Runners must attempt to avoid contact with the catcher on plays at home.
 - ♣ Penalty: runner may be called out and possibly ejected if contact is intentional.
 - If a batted ball:
 - ♣ Hits the pitching machine or umpire
 - ♣ Pops up directly above the pitching machine
 - ♣ Is unplayable due to the pitching machine’s position
 - Ruling: Ball is dead; runners advance one base.
 - Runners may continue advancing on an outfield hit until the ball returns to the infield.
 - ♣ Once in the infield, runners must stop at the nearest base.
 - Infield is defined as inside the base path lines.

SPORTSMANSHIP PHILOSOPHY

- Clearfield City Recreation is dedicated to providing quality recreational sports programs in a spirit of sportsmanship and fellowship for our community. It is expected that all players, coaches, parents, and spectators will strongly adhere to all rules of play and etiquette involving the program.