

Clearfield Recreation

3rd/4th Grade Pitching Developmental League Rules 2026

GAME FORMAT

- Each team roster may have a maximum of 13 players.
- We support equal playing time.
- Official score will be kept but 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.
- Remember making the program fun and teaching sportsmanship is more important than winning!
- Games last 6 innings or 80 minutes, whichever comes first.
- No new innings begin after 60 minutes and the game is drop-dead (ends no matter what) at 80 minutes.
- 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 two complete innings OR 30 minutes have been played, the game is considered complete as of the last completed inning and will not be rescheduled.
 - If less than two complete innings AND less than 30 minutes have been played, the game will be rescheduled and will start from the point the game was postponed.
- Games can end in a tie.
- An inning ends when either of the following occurs:
 - 3 outs are recorded
 - A team scores 6 runs
 - Only 6 runs will count each inning. Even if more runs are scored before the completion of the play.
- 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 and must notify the scorekeeper before entering the game.
 - Batting lineups must be submitted 5 minutes prior to game time (to the scorekeeper).
 - Scorekeepers track individual runs, outs and team score.
- Substitutions
 - There can be 10 players on defense per inning.
 - The 10th player must play in the outfield as a rover.

- o A player cannot sit out 2 consecutive innings or a 2nd inning before every other player on the team has sat out 1 inning.
 - o Substitutions cannot be made in the middle of an inning (except for injuries or a pitching change).
 - o Once a pitcher is removed, they cannot re-enter as a pitcher in the same inning.
 - o Pitchers are limited to 6 outs per game.
 - o Unlimited defensive substitutions are allowed between innings.
- Protests and Ejections
 - o Rule violations (not judgment calls) must be brought to the umpire's attention before the next pitch.
 - o If unresolved, the Nightly Supervisor makes the final ruling.
 - o Anyone ejected must leave the field/park immediately.
 - o Coaches are responsible for the behavior of their players and parents.
 - o 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 conference per inning.
- If they request a second conference in the same inning, the pitcher must be replaced.
 - o Just replacing a pitcher does not count as a defensive conference.
- Time for an injured player or water breaks does not count as a conference, provided no instruction is given during water breaks.
- One Clearfield Recreation employees will manage home plate and one will manage the field.
- Coaches of the pitching team are expected to pick up foul 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 distance will be 46 feet.
- Bats: 26"-29" bats will be provided.
- Ball: 9 in. Baseball.
- 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.
- When a coach is pitching to their own team, a youth defensive pitcher will stand to the side of and one foot behind the coach.

Defense (Fielding)

- Defensive players must stay in their positions until the ball is hit.
- The infield fly rule is in effect.
- There is no dropped third strike rule.
- A coach pitcher enters when a batter is walked by a kid pitcher.
- The coach pitcher inherits the existing strike count.
- Coach pitches until the batter either strikes out or hits the ball.
- If the coach pitcher hits the batter:
 - Ball is dead, no pitch is called and runners return to their base at time of pitch
- If a thrown ball hits the coach pitcher or the umpire:
 - Ball is dead and runners advance one base
- If coach pitcher intentionally interferes with a batted ball:
 - Batter is out and runners return to their base at time of pitch

Offense (Batting/Running)

- Base runners must stay on base until the ball is hit or crosses home plate (no leading off).
- Stealing 2nd or 3rd base is allowed when the pitched ball reaches the plate. Stealing home is NOT allowed. If a player leaves early, then the umpire will give both teams a warning on the first occurrence and send the baserunner back to the prior base. Each occurrence thereafter, the offending player will be called out.
- Batting
 - No bunting or swinging bunts.
- 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).
 - ♣ If a player is stealing 2nd and the catcher makes a throw and the throw goes into the outfield, the runner MAY NOT advance to third base. The runner received their base on the steal attempt. (1 base per pitch).
 - 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 umpire or the coach pitcher, the 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.