



# Yorkville Youth Athletic Association Cactus/Coach Pitch League Rules

## General & Administrative

1. **The Field** - The field will be a 60-foot diamond with the center of the **pitcher's circle** located 45 feet from the back edge of home plate. Each base will be 60-feet apart, measured from the back of one base to the back of the next. The **pitcher's circle** will be approximately 12 feet in diameter.
2. **The Umpires** – At least one umpire will be assigned to each game. It is the umpire's job to keep track of strikes, foul balls, and the number of pitches thrown to each batter. It is also the umpire's responsibility to call base runners out or safe, and will keep track of the number of outs. Umpires will have the final say on any call. Umpires will NOT issue warnings regarding bunting, leaving the base early, sliding, or throwing the bat.
  - a. If the league is unable to provide an umpire, each team will provide one person to serve as an umpire. The fielding team will provide an umpire behind home-plate to track strikes and swings, and the hitting team will provide an umpire in the field to call players out or safe, and to keep track of outs.
3. **The Teams**
  - a. **Minimum players:** Games will be played regardless the number of players on a team.
  - b. **Bat the roster:** During the game, the teams will bat their roster of all the players present at the game, regardless of the number of players each team has. No pinch-hitting is permitted. The batting order may not be altered. **Only (8) eight batters may bat in an offensive half inning.**
4. **The Game**
  - a. **Time-Limit:** The elapsed time for any game shall not exceed **Ninety (90) minutes (1<sup>st</sup> Grade) or 60 minutes (Kindergarten)**
    - i. If, in the opinion of the umpire(s), at the end of a complete inning there is insufficient time remaining before the expiration of the **time limit** for the teams to play another complete inning, the umpire(s) shall rule that the game is complete.
  - b. **Innings:** No game should exceed six (6) innings.
  - c. **Half-Inning:** A half-inning shall consist of three (3) "outs" or **8 "at-bats"** by the offensive team, whichever occurs first.
  - d. **Final Batter:** When the final batter in the inning comes to bat, the umpire will call "two out, last batter". At that time play will resume and shall be played as any other out, or until the umpire calls time out at the end of the play.
  - e. **No Score or Standings:** There will be no official score kept, nor will there be standings kept by the league.
5. **Coaching**
  - a. **Number of Coaches:** Each team will have at least one coach, and **may not have more than three coaches on the field at a game.**

- b. **On the Field:** The fielding team may not have any coaches on the field. There should not be coaches in the outfield. All coaches should be in the dugout. The batting team will have a coach-pitcher and base coaches in foul territory at first and third base.
- c. **Uniform:** Coaches shall wear a team shirt, and hat during the game to be easily identified.
- d. **Boundaries:** While the game is being played coaches will remain in foul territory. They may not cross the foul lines into fair territory except in case of a medical emergency, injury, or if time out is granted by the umpire. Between innings coaches may cross the foul lines and enter the field to position their defensive players.
- e. **Attendance:** Coaches will keep attendance at games and shall report to the YYAA Director any player who misses two or more games.
- f. **Rules Reminder:** Prior to the start of each game, coaches are required to remind and warn their players of the rules and penalties for bunting, leaving the base early, sliding, and throwing the bat.
- g. **Game Responsibility** – Coaches are responsible for fielding a team to all Yorkville Youth Athletic Association scheduled games, regardless of the number of players who will attend. Coaches do not have the authority to cancel any game for any reason. Any disputes with fellow coaches, umpires, directors, rules or Yorkville administration, shall be discussed with parties involved and Yorkville Youth Athletic Association Executive Director at the proper appointed time. The only time a coach may remove a team from the field is in the event of imminent danger.

## 6. Equipment

- a. **Batting helmets:** All batters and base runners MUST wear a helmet.
- b. **Catching Equipment:** Catchers must wear full equipment, including helmet, mask, throat protector, chest protector, and shin guards.
- c. **Uniforms:** All players must wear sneakers or turf shoes, a uniform including shirt, hat, and pants. The shirt must be tucked into the pants. Players may not wear baseball, football, or soccer cleats. Players may wear batting gloves.

## Batting

### 1. At-Bat

- a. 1<sup>st</sup> Grade - An "at-bat" is one hit, **seven (7) "pitches,"** or three (3) "strikes"- whichever occurs first.
- b. **Kindergarten – An “At-bat” is one hit, five pitches, or three strikes – whichever occurs first. The batter may take one swing off a tee if he strikes out.**
  - i. **Pitches & "No Pitch":** Any ball "thrown" by the coach will be ruled a "pitch" for the purposes of the "seven (7) pitch rule unless the home plate umpire rules the "throw" to be either a "Dead Ball" or a "No Pitch". If the coach makes a "throw" or series of "throws" which clearly and without doubt are unhittable, or which bounce well in front of the batter's box, the

home plate umpire will rule such "throws" to be a "No Pitch." A "No Pitch" will not count towards the seven (7) pitches.

ii. **Strikes: There are two kinds of "strikes"**

1. A "**strike**" occurs when a batter swings at a "pitch" and does not make contact with the ball or the batter, having a count of less than two (2) strikes, hits a foul ball.
2. The "seventh (7th) pitch" rule does not apply if on the seventh (7th) pitch, the batter makes contact with the ball and that contact results in a foul ball that is not caught in the air by a defensive player. The "at-bat" continues as if the seventh (7th) pitch did not occur.

c. **Special Foul Ball Rules:** A batted ball that does not travel beyond the pitcher's mound, or that bounces near home plate will be ruled, "foul" by the umpire.

2. **Bunting:** A batter may not "bunt" or attempt to "bunt" a ball with the purpose of getting on base, neither from the tee, nor from a coach's pitch. If a player bunts a ball or attempts to bunt a ball, the umpire will immediately call the batter out.
3. **Dropped third strike rule:** On a dropped third strike, the batter is out. He may not advance to first base.
4. **Bases-on-balls:** There are no base-on-balls, or walks.
5. **Avoiding a pitch:** A batter who steps out of the batter's box to avoid being hit by a pitch will not be penalized.
6. **Hit by a pitch:** If a batter is hit by a ball thrown by the coach, his at-bat continues, and the ball thrown will be not be counted as a "pitch" for the seven (7) pitch rule.
7. **Dropping the bat** - The batter, after batting the ball, and before or while running to first base, will drop the bat in a safe and controlled manner in an area on or near home plate or close to the first base line. If a batter does not "drop" the bat in a safe and controlled manner the umpire will immediately stop play and call the batter "out." All base runners will then return to their original bases.
8. **Helmet:** All batters must wear a batting helmet.

## Base Running

1. **No Stealing or Leading:** A base runner will keep one foot on the base until after the ball crosses home plate. Base stealing is not permitted. If a base runner, in order to increase his "lead" to the next base, removes his foot from the base before the pitch crosses home plate, the umpire will call the base runner "out."
2. **Sliding:** Sliding is permitted at all Central Park Fields, except into first base. A player may refuse to slide, but must not come in contact with a fielder – he must give himself up by walking to the base. No head-first sliding allowed.
3. **No Advancing:** Base runners will not advance on pitches missed by the catcher or pitches that go by the catcher.
4. **Dead Ball, No Advance:** Play is stopped and a base runner may not advance to the next base when the umpire determines that the lead base runner is stopped and controlled. The lead base runner will be considered as stopped and controlled and the play over when the umpire determines that the ball, after being hit into fair territory:

- a. has been returned to the "pitcher-player" inside the pitcher's circle; or
  - b. has been returned to the infield and is in the process of being returned to the "pitcher-player" by a defensive player; or
  - c. has been returned to the infield and the ball is "being held" by a defensive player for the purpose of being returned to the "pitcher-player." (*This rule is to prevent coaches from unfairly taking advantage of young fielders, who may be unaware of all the base runners, by encouraging their base runners to run with abandon, creating panic on the defense, and producing wild throws.*)
- 5. Runner Awarded Next Base:** A base runner will be awarded the next base when the umpire determines:
- a. At the time the lead runner was "stopped and controlled" at a base the base runner was half-way, or beyond, to the runner's next base; or
  - b. At the time when the lead runner was "stopped and controlled," the base runner was forced to the next base; or
  - c. When an overthrow occurs. Only when the overthrown ball touches a side fence, an object, or is touched accidentally or intentionally by any person situated along the sidelines before it is touched or "played" by a defensive player.
- 6. Runner Awarded Home:** A base runner who is between third base and home plate is allowed to "score" if the tenth batter of the inning is retired when a fielder, in possession of the ball, steps on any base in the path of the tenth batter (force out), unless the force out occurs at home plate. If the force out is at home the runner does not "score."

## Pitching (Coach and Pitcher-Player)

- 1. Pitcher-Player:** One player from the defensive team will stand approximately three feet to either the left or right side of the pitching coach. The player may not stand in front of the coach. The player may move freely after the pitch is thrown, however, the player should stay in the vicinity of the pitcher's mound to promote players' understanding of positioning.
- 2. Coach-Pitcher:** A coach from each team will throw pitches to his own team.
  - a. Overhand:** Coaches MUST throw overhand to their batters.
  - b. Pitcher's Circle:** If a pitcher's circle is provided on the field, the coach-pitcher must throw from and remain in the circle after the pitch is thrown.
  - c. Ball Touches Coach:** If a batted ball touches the coach-pitcher, prior to the ball being touched by a defensive player, it is an automatic "dead ball." It will not count as a pitch, and there is no penalty. Play resumes as if the pitch did not occur.
  - d. Ball Touches Player, Then Coach:** If a batted ball that is intentionally touched, or "played," by a defensive player then touches the coach the ball is still in play.

## Catching

- 1. Equipment:** Catchers should wear full catching equipment as specified in the "Equipment" section of the rulebook.
- 2. Position:** Catchers should be positioned behind home plate, and in front of the umpire.

## Fielding

1. **Maximum number of fielders:** There is no maximum number of fielders. All players should play in the field.
2. **Maximum number of infielders:** 1<sup>st</sup> Grade - No more than six (6) players may be positioned in the infield, one of those six (6) includes the catcher, and one includes the player-pitcher. Kindergarten – Two Pitcher-Players are allowed.
3. **Maximum number of outfielders:** All fielders not in the infield will be positioned in the outfield – there is no maximum.
4. **Infield fly rule:** The infield fly rule does NOT apply in this league.
5. **Infielders' Positioning:** All infielders must play in "normal fielding positions," first, second, third base, and shortstop. No infielder or outfielder is permitted to stand on, or directly next to, second base prior to the pitch being thrown. All infielders, except pitcher and catcher, will remain behind an imaginary line between 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> base until after the pitch is thrown.
6. **Outfielders' Positioning:** All defensive players not positioned in the infield will be in the outfield. All outfielders will be in fair territory not less than 8-10 feet behind the bases and base paths between 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> base. (*Note: The intent and purpose of this rule is to specifically prohibit the use of the "short fielder" who could be used to fill in gaps in the infield or who would cover second base when the second baseman is playing a ball.*)

## Special Ground Rules

1. **Field Boundaries:** A batted ball, which reaches the fence, benches or bleachers in the outfield, is in play. Runners may advance as far as they can and they may be thrown out.
2. **Interference with the ball:**
  - a. When a batted ball is hit beyond the last fielder, and any person, or object, interferes with the flight, or path of the ball in any way, the batted ball will be ruled a home run.
  - b. If one of the **fielding team's** coaches touches or kicks the ball it will result in a dead ball and one extra base for each base runner on the batting team. **For example**, if a player were running from 1<sup>st</sup> to 2<sup>nd</sup> base and one of the fielding team's coaches touches the ball that base runner would be awarded 3<sup>rd</sup> base. *Remember*, coaches for the fielding team are not allowed in the field.
  - c. If a coach from the **batting team** purposely touches a batted ball in fair territory the batter will be out, and all base runners will have to go back to the bases from which they started. *See the "Pitching" section for rules on batted-balls hitting the coach-pitcher.*
3. **Interference with a fielder:**
  - a. A fly-ball shall be ruled a "dead ball" and "no pitch" when the fielder, who could have fielded the ball on the fly, is interfered with by a non-player, and the interference kept the fielder from making the catch.

- b. A ground-ball shall be ruled a double, and all runners will advance two bases when an outfielder, who could have fielded the ball, is interfered with by a non-player during his attempt to field the ball.
- 4. **Coach/Player Interference:** No coach or player, excluding the coach-pitcher, fielding players, and batter, are allowed on the field while the ball is in play. If any coach or player interferes with the game while the ball is in play, it will result in the following:
  - a. **Fielding Team:** If a coach or player from the fielding team interferes with play, the umpire will stop the play, and all base runners on base, including the batter, will get an extra base.
  - b. **Batting Team:** If a coach or player from the batting team interferes with play, the umpire will stop the play, the batter will be out, and all base runners will have to go back to the bases from which they started.

## Sportsmanship

- 5. **Throwing equipment** – Deliberately throwing a bat, helmet, glove, or other piece of equipment is illegal.
- 6. **Fighting** - A player who instigates a fight will be automatically ejected. A player who responds in a manner to defend himself will not be ejected. However, a player who responds to an instigated fight in a manner that escalates the fight shall be ejected as well.
- 7. **Unsportsmanlike Conduct** - Behavior including, but not limited to, trash-talking, arguing with an umpire, purposely distracting the pitcher, and foul language, can result in suspension.
- 8. **Suspension** - If warranted, the league, or organizational directors, may suspend a player or a coach from any team. Coaches can bench their players, and can request that a player be suspended.