

1st GRADE PETBALL

Welcome to the 1st grade Instructional program. The purpose of this program is to provide 1st grade children an opportunity to play ball in a highly *instructional* atmosphere. The emphasis is on learning the rules and skills of the game and on having *fun*. Winning on the scoreboard is *not* the objective. Coaches are strongly urged to play their players at a variety of positions in each game. The children are much too young to be pigeon-holed into any one position. Keep it casual. Keep it fun.

1. Boys will use the "RIP 5" baseball and girls will use the "RIF 1" baseball. The first team listed on the schedule is the home team and is responsible for providing a good ball and bases.
2. Pitching distance – any distance from which the kids can hit. Base distance: Boys – 55 feet; Girls – 45 feet.
3. For boys, games will be seven (7) innings or 90 minutes, whichever comes first. Start no new inning after 90 minutes.
For girls, games will be seven (7) innings or 80 minutes, whichever comes first. Start no new inning after 80 minutes.
4. Catchers must wear a mask, full flapped helmet, a chest protector, and shin guards.
5. Teams should field ten players but may play shorthanded or borrow from the other team. There is free substitution. Try to even out all playing time in the field as much as possible. The kids won't learn by sitting on the bench.
6. Both teams will use roster batting order. (All players are in the batting lineup.) Batters and runners must wear full flapped helmets. The runner is not out if the helmet accidentally falls off. Six pitch limit per batter. The batter hits or sits after six pitches. Six pitches count as an out. No called strikes or balls. All bats should be taped or have a safety grip to prevent slipping.
7. Coaches mutually agree on rescheduling games due to rain or other reasons. All teams are to notify the other team and the field manager if your team cannot make a game.
8. No balks, leadoffs or stealing. Play stops when the ball is returned to the pitching area, but fielders should be taught how to stop the runners without just throwing the ball to the pitcher. Base runners in motion get the next base only if they are at least halfway to the next base *before the throw*.
9. The 1st base coach umpires 1st base. A coach will pitch to his own team (try to utilize the same coach who pitches at practice) and will serve as home plate umpire. Two defensive coaches are allowed on the field, one between 1st and 2nd base (who umpires 2nd base) and one between 2nd and 3rd base (who umpires 3rd).

10. ***Five (5) runs or three (3) outs per inning, whichever comes first.*** Keep track of runs only to know the end of the inning, not to determine who wins or loses. Everybody wins. Help the kids learn and love the game.