

Mecklenburg County Youth Sports

Machine Pitch (7-9 years) REVISED Condensed Rules Sheet

Notes: Score is NOT kept. Official time is kept by Park & Rec staff. Outs will be recorded. Staff Umpires officiate the game from behind the pitchers' mound area.

Field:

- Bases -60'
- Machine Pitch Mound – 38' approximate

Balls/Bats:

- Ball – RIF #5 Safety Ball (see attached acceptable list)
- Bat – can't exceed 2 5/8 inches in diameter

Roster/Forfeits/Grace Period:

- Min 6/Max 12
- There are no forfeits or grace period. The games begin with those players present at scheduled game time.
- Late arriving players enter the game on offense at the end of the batting order and on defense when their team is fielding.

Game Length:

- Complete games consist of 5 innings of play or 75-minute maximum time limit, whichever comes first. No new inning can begin once the 75-minute time limit has been reached. If the inning has already started and the 75-minute time limit has been reached, the **full inning** will be allowed to be played.

Offense:

- Batters wear **sanitized** helmets.
- **Batters strongly encouraged to wear batting gloves on both hands when batting**
- **Bats should not be shared with other teammates or they must be sanitized before each use**
- Batting order consists of entire team roster of players present for the game and remains consistent throughout the game.
- Late arriving players will be added to the end of the batting order
- **Max of 12 batters per team per each ½ inning (unless 3 outs are recorded).**
- If less than 12 players are present at game time, all players present will bat (some players will bat twice) or until 3 outs have been recorded. **Penalty "outs" will not be called for any skipped batting order spots if less than 12 players.**
- If player injury and unable to bat, his space in the order may be skipped over without a penalty "out" being called.
- Each batter receives a maximum of 6 pitches. **If the batter hits a foul ball on the 6th pitch, he/she shall receive 1 additional pitch. If the machine delivers a wild pitch on the 6th pitch, the batter shall receive 1 additional pitch.**

- If 6 pitches (or 1 additional pitch as noted above) are thrown, the ball has not been put in play or 3 strikes SWUNG AND MISSED, the batter is out. Foul balls do not count as strikes.
- **WALKS NOT ALLOWED**
- **MCPRD staff will operate the pitching machine.**
- Pitching machine alterations may only be made by MCPRD staff.
- A batted ball that hits either the pitching machine or pitching machine operator before touching a fielder will be a “dead” ball and the batter and base runner(s) will be awarded one base.
- If a batted ball touches a player before touching the pitching machine or the pitching machine operator, the ball will remain “live”.
- A thrown ball that hits the either pitching machine or pitching machine operator will result in a “dead” ball and the base runner(s) will be awarded one base.
- Coaches may give instructions to hitters and base runners as deemed necessary. Coaches should try not to touch their base runners when rounding the bases.
- Excessive delay of game (ump’s discretion) results in a warning. Additional offenses result in the batter being called out (no runners advance).
- 1 verbal warning (given to both teams) for throwing/sliding the bat. The play is “dead” on any thrown ball situation. Runner(s) must return to their original base. The batter returns to bat upon the initial infraction. Any subsequent infractions, regardless of team, the batter is “out”.
- No stealing: must have contact with base until ball has been hit. If a runner leaves the base early, the ball will be declared “dead”, a warning will be given to the offending team and the batter will receive a substitute pitch. One warning per offending team – further violations will result in an “out” being called on the offending player.
- Base runners may not advance on a passed ball by the catcher or a wild pitch by the machine.
- **Runners MUST physically touch the SECOND home plate before the catcher catches the ball with his/her foot on the regular home plate to be called “safe”. Umpires judgement is final.**
- **Runners are “out” at home plate if the catcher catches the ball, with one of his/her feet on the regular home plate, before the runner has physically touched the SECOND home plate. Umpires judgement/decision is final.**
- If there is an obstruction play at home plate because the runner has run to the incorrect home plate (the regular one) to score OR the catcher has run to the SECOND home plate to make the play on the runner, the umpire shall call “dead ball” and give a first-time, one-time verbal warning to both teams. The ball that was put “in play” stands; and once the “dead ball” has been declared by the umpire, no further baseball plays can be made. Runner(s) return to their previous bases as determined by the umpire. *Exception: If the bases were loaded and the runner at third is forced home on the obstruction play, the batter will receive another full 6-pitch at bat and runners return to their previous bases. Any subsequent obstruction situations shall result in an “out” if the runner(s) caused the obstruction at home plate or “safe” if the catcher caused the obstruction at home plate. Umpires judgement/decision is final.
- Only 1 overthrow allowed per play. After one overthrow, the ball is “dead” and the base runners advance one base per the umpires’ judgment based on where the runners were when the overthrow occurred.
- **Each offensive ½ inning ends: 1) after 12 players have batted or 2) 3 OUTS have been recorded.**

Defense:

- Maximum of 9 defensive players (catcher, pitcher, first base, second base, shortstop, third base, left, center and right outfielders)
- Catchers must wear helmet and face mask, throat protector, chest protector, shin guards and CUP. Hockey style masks with built on protector are acceptable. **PENALTY – 1 warning per offending team**, subsequent occurrences result in forfeit declared if the above catcher's safety equipment is not provided by the team(s) present.
- **Catchers must provide their own equipment. No sharing of catchers' equipment permitted.**
- **Sharing of any fielding equipment (gloves) strictly prohibited.**
- **Play Stops** when: 1) infield ball is possessed by a defensive player and they hold the ball above their head with arm extended, (umpires' judgment on base runners' advancement or not) or 2) defensive team prevents the lead base runners forward progress
- **Players rotated** – to promote opportunity for skill development.

Re-entry:

- The batting order must stay the same throughout the games, but players are allowed to change defensive positions.

MUST PLAY:

- **If more than 9 players present, subs must play at least 2 innings defensively, except in the case of player injury.**

Coaches:

- Each team is allowed a maximum of 3 coaches – **Coaches are required to wear a face mask/shield/covering at all times. MCPRD staff will assist with equipment and player sanitation (i.e. wiping down of bats and batting helmets before each use, sanitizing players' hands before his/her at bats if he/she is not wearing batting gloves) per COVID-19 safety guidelines.**
- Coach ID badges required for all approved volunteer bench personnel.
- Base Coaches remain in coach's box **and must maintain 6 feet social distancing from all players and staff umpire as much as possible. Exception – when assisting player(s) at bat.**