

First Pitch

Summary:

First pitch is a game played by children who are turning 6 or 7 in the current calendar year. A coach or parent pitches underhand to batters. Batters try to hit the ball onto the playing field and run the bases to score runs. Defensive players try to touch bases while having control of the ball to make outs. If a defensive player raises the ball in the air, the play ends and all runners advance to the next base only if forced.

2011 is the first year for **First Pitch** in the PBA. Our rules are a composite primarily drawn from the e rules for First Pitch as published by the Whitby Minor Baseball Association, and the rules for "Coach Pitch" as published by the Oakville Minor Baseball Association.

Details:

1. The game is for boys and girls turning 6 or 7 in the current calendar year.
2. Games begin with a warm-up at 6:00 PM and first pitch thrown at 6:15 PM. Games end at approximately 7:30 PM. No new inning is started after 7:15 PM.
3. All batters bat each inning regardless of the number of outs made by the defensive team (i.e. 3 outs does not end the half inning.)
4. Each team will have the same number of batters each inning. If the number of players on each team differ, the team with fewer players bats the same number of players per inning as the team with more players, rotating in order through their lineup. For instance, a team with 8 players playing a team with 10 players would bat 1-8, 1,2 in the first inning, 3-8, 1-4 in the second inning, etc.
5. All players will play a defensive position in their defensive half of the inning.
6. There are no bases on balls, no lead offs (before the batter makes contact with the ball,) and no stealing.
7. Two coaches are allowed in the outfield during their defensive half of the inning. The coaches may direct, but not physically assist players.
8. All infield players must rotate with an outfield player every inning when possible. No player is allowed to play in the same defensive position more than once in a game. The infield positions are catcher, pitcher, first base, second base, third base, shortstop, and rover (between 1st and 2nd). Remaining players are dispersed through the outfield, and must play at least 10 feet behind the base-lines.
9. Pitching distance is 25 feet from home plate. A coach or parent shall throw a maximum of four underhand pitches to the batter. A **Tee** will be introduced if the batter is not successful and the batter will be permitted two more swings. The "umpire" will call "last pitch" before the second attempt from the Tee.
10. The coach or parent pitching acts as umpire, calling the outs, overthrows, and directing base-runners. Coaches for both teams should know the rules, and assist by enforcing the rules with their own team.
11. No bunting is allowed. Batter must take a full swing.
12. A batter is out if:
 - a) after a maximum of 4 pitched balls plus 2 attempts from the Tee, he or she has not hit a fair ball that crosses the dead ball line.
 - b) when his/her fair ball, dead ball, or foul ball is caught "on the fly" by a defensive player.

13. The **dead ball line** is an imaginary line that extends from the tip of the plate 25 feet down the first base line and runs in an arc from there to a spot 25 feet from the tip of the plate down the third base line.

14. A fair ball is a legally batted ball that goes over the dead ball line. A dead ball is a legally batted ball that does not go over the dead ball line. If a defensive play is made before a batted ball reaches the dead ball line, the ball is live (fair) only if it is a fly ball fielded in the air, or a ground ball that in the opinion of the umpire would have crossed the dead ball line in fair territory if not touched before it reached the line.

15. Defensive players must stay behind the dead ball line until the ball is hit.

16. Base-runners may advance one base when the ball is out of play, and as many as possible on an overthrow when the ball stays in play. These rules do not apply to base-runners with last batter status.

17. **Last batter status:** Any players on the offensive team who are base runners, when the last batter is at bat, are regarded in the same manner as the last batter, and no defensive play can be made on them on the bases. They are all forced home when the last batter has hit the ball fairly. The catcher must have control of the ball and touch home plate to stop the play. No runs count after the catcher touches home plate and the half inning ends. If the last batter strikes out or is out on pitch count, the inning is over and all runners are stranded. In the event the last batter is out on a fly ball, the baserunners are permitted to score provided they are on the base when the ball is caught or they re-touch the base after the ball is caught. These runners must score prior to the catcher having control of the ball and touching home plate. It is the responsibility of the offensive coach to call out 'last batter'. If 'last batter' is not announced all base runners will return to the positions they occupied at the time the 'last batter' took his/her position at the plate and the play will be replayed.

18. Coaches are not allowed to move any players from their position during an inning except in for an injury.

19. **Time is called and the play is over** when an infielder raises the ball in the air and in the opinion of the umpire no attempt is made to make a play on any base-runner. Base-runners will then stay on the base they occupy or advance to the base they were approaching, provided they have reached half way to the next base.

20. Outfielders must play 10 feet behind the baselines. The ball must be thrown from an outfielder into an infielder. An outfielder cannot run in and tag a base in order to make an out.

21. The length of the base path is 50'.

22. Base-runners tagged out on the base-paths or forced out at any base, return to the bench.

23. The infield fly rule is not in effect.

24. The ball is the official (soft) T-Ball.

25. Players must wear uniforms issued by the PBA and catchers must be fully equipped. Batters, base-runners, and defensive players playing the pitcher position must wear protective helmets.