



JUNIOR BELLS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

2025

RULES & GUIDELINES

3-4 YEAR OLDS



Warm-Up (15min. before game)

- **Group Warm Up (2x per exercise)**
 - Jogging
 - High Knees
 - Shuffles
 - Skips
 - Bear Crawls
 - Arm Circles
- **Catch Play With a Partner**

Game Play Rules (45 minute game)

- **Ball Type:**
 - Dodgeballs or large tennis balls for safety. Progress to safety balls by end of season if player is consistently making contact.
- **Bases:**
 - 35 feet apart, bases marked with colored displays to help players identify them.
- **Batting:**
 - Each batter gets 5 pitches from a coach from 15 feet (underhand).
 - If the batter misses all 5 swings, they use a tee to hit.
 - Keep bases full at the start of each offensive inning to maximize base running.
- **Defense:**
 - No catcher.
 - All plays are directed to first base to teach proper throwing.
 - Players can progress to throwing to the closest base as skills develop.
 - Defensive positions rotate every inning. Use colored dots to mark positions.
- **Fielding & Rotation:**
 - Every player gets one at-bat before switching offense/defense
 - Last batter of the inning does a HOME RUN (runs all bases).
- **Parent Volunteers (2):**
 - **ONE** parent assisting with dugout organization, helmets & bats
 - **ONE** parent acting as a catcher/retrieving and returning balls to pitcher



5-6 YEAR OLDS



Warm-Up (15min. before game)

- **Group Warm Up (2x per exercise)**
 - Jogging
 - High Knees
 - Shuffles
 - Skips
 - Bear Crawls
 - Arm Circles
- **Catch Play With a Partner**

Game Play Rules (one hour game)

- **Ball Type:**
 - Soft safety baseballs.
- **Bases:**
 - 40 feet apart.
- **Batting:**
 - Each batter gets **5 pitches** from a coach from 20 feet underhand. Progress to overhand if player is making consistent contact.
 - If all 5 swings are missed, they hit from a **tee**.
 - Every player gets **one at bat** before switching offense/defense
- **Base Running:**
 - Keep bases **full** at the start of each offensive inning to maximize base running.
 - Runners advance **one base at a time** (unless the ball reaches the outfield).
- **Defense:**
 - No catcher; a coach or volunteer helps retrieve balls behind the plate.
 - Players **rotate positions every inning** to experience different positions.
 - All fielders must attempt to throw the ball to first or make a simple play.
- **Fielding & Rotation:**
 - Each inning ends after all batters have hit.
 - Last batter of the inning runs a **HOME RUN**.
 - **Coaches may stand in the field** to help instruct players.
- **Parent Volunteers (2)**
 - ONE parent assisting with dugout organization, helmets & bats
 - ONE parent acting as a catcher/retrieving and returning balls to pitcher



7-8 YEAR OLDS



Warm-Up (15min. before game)

- **Group Warm Up (2x per exercise)**
 - Jogging
 - High Knees
 - Shuffles
 - Skips
 - Bear Crawls
 - Arm Circles
- **Catch Play With a Partner**

Game Play Rules (one hour game)

- **Ball Type:**
 - Start with safety baseball, progress to standard baseball if player is making consistent contact.
- **Bases:**
 - 50 feet apart.
- **Pitching/Batting:**
 - **Coach-pitch (underhand) from 30 feet.** Progress to overhand as player is making consistent contact.
 - Batter gets 5 pitches. After 5 pitches, the player is out.
- **Base Running:**
 - Runners may advance **one base on infield hits** and **multiple bases on outfield hits**.
- **Defense:**
 - Players are assigned **regular positions** but rotate every 2 innings.
 - Teams can play with a catcher, if appropriate, later in the season. Full catchers gear will be required (provided by Bells). In early season games, a parent volunteer will help retrieve balls.
 - Players are encouraged to throw to **the correct base** based on the situation.
- **Fielding & Rotation:**
 - Standard 3-out rule applies and clears bases. Coaches should write lineups and be prepared to switch offense/defense after 3 outs.
- **Parent Volunteers:**
 - **ONE** dugout helper
 - **ONE** catcher/ball retriever



9-10 YEAR OLDS



Warm-Up (15min. before game)

- **Group Warm Up (2x per exercise)**
 - Jogging
 - High Knees
 - Shuffles
 - Skips
 - Bear Crawls
 - Arm Circles
- **Catch Play With a Partner**

Game Play Rules (1.5 hour game)

- **Ball Type:**
 - Standard baseball
- **Bases:**
 - **60** feet apart.
- **Pitching/Batting:**
 - **Player-pitch from 45 feet.** One player can pitch 30 pitches per inning or 5 runs. The inning is over after 30 pitches or 5 runs.
 - The team can bring in another pitcher once 30 pitches is reached.
 - No innings will be started after 90 minutes.
- **Base Running:**
 - Runners may lead off, but stealing is not permitted. Players can advance a base on a passed ball, but may not take home on a passed ball.
- **Defense:**
 - Players are assigned **regular positions** but rotate every 2 innings.
 - Teams will play with a catcher. Full catchers gear will be required (provided by Bells).
 - Players are encouraged to throw to **the correct base** based on the situation.
- **Fielding & Rotation:**
 - Standard 3-out rule applies and clears bases. Coaches should write lineups and be prepared to switch offense/defense after 3 outs.
- **Parent Volunteers:**
 - **ONE** dugout helper
 - **ONE** in-field umpire



11-12 YEAR OLDS



Warm-Up (15min. before game)

- **Group Warm Up (2x per exercise)**
 - Jogging
 - High Knees
 - Shuffles
 - Skips
 - Bear Crawls
 - Arm Circles
- **Catch Play With a Partner**

Game Play Rules (1.5 hour game)

- **Ball Type:**
 - Standard baseball
- **Bases:**
 - **60** feet apart.
- **Pitching/Batting:**
 - **Player-pitch from 45 feet.** One player can pitch 45 pitches per inning or 5 runs. The inning is over after 30 pitches or 5 runs.
 - The team can bring in another pitcher once 45 pitches is reached.
 - No new innings will be started after 90 minutes.
- **Base Running:**
 - Runners may lead off, but stealing is not permitted. Players can advance a base on a passed ball, but may not take home on a passed ball.
- **Defense:**
 - Players are assigned **regular positions** but rotate every 2 innings.
 - Teams will play with a catcher. Full catchers gear will be required (provided by Bells).
 - Players are encouraged to throw to **the correct base** based on the situation.
- **Fielding & Rotation:**
 - Standard 3-out rule applies and clears bases. Coaches should write lineups and be prepared to switch offense/defense after 3 outs.
- **Parent Volunteers:**
 - **ONE** dugout helper
 - **ONE** in-field umpire

