

Wylie Youth Baseball Association 5U/6U Rules

T-BALL SPECIFIC RULES



5U & 6U

Update as of Fall 2016

Wylie Baseball Association

These rules are general guidelines for coaches and umpires to use during T-Ball games while playing for the Wylie Youth Baseball Association. In most cases, normal baseball rules apply. This will cover the nuances that are different for T-Ball. There are some pre and post-game duties that need to be attended to that are added as well.

First and foremost, T-Ball is about fun for the players. The coaches and parents will have fun participating in the development of the players, watching them grow and learn to love the game of baseball.

Please err on the side of safety and good sportsmanship when teaching the players and participating during the games.

The only major difference between the two leagues is that in **5U**, the coach will not be allowed to pitch to the batter. **All players in 5U must hit the ball off the tee.**

In **6U**, coaches **have the option** to pitch to those players that they believe are ready or allow them to hit off of the tee.

Quick Summary: 5 innings, 5 runs per inning, no new inning after 1 hour,
Spring - complete inning, Fall - Drop dead at 1:15

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GAME:

- 1) **It is the home team's responsibility to get the bases from lock box, if they are not on the field.** There is one located outside the fence on CP-2 (Left field) and outside the fence on CP-3 (Right field) or inside the dugout. The home team for the last game of the day is responsible to put the bases away.
- 2) The league will supply **one umpire** at each regular season game. In the event you arrive at the fields and no umpire is available at the scheduled start time, each T-ball team will supply a parent to act as an umpire.

The visiting team parent will umpire at home plate and the home team parent will umpire at 2nd base.

If a parent cannot perform the duty, then an assistant coach may fill in as umpire. If the assistant performs the umpiring duties, then they cannot participate as a coach. NOTE: During the tournament, only official league umpires will be used. Please contact your league director within 24 hours to notify them of an umpire's absence.

- 3) The home team will keep the **official score book**. This involves keeping track of the number of runs and outs for both teams during each inning. The visiting team may also keep a scorebook as well but the Home team scorebook is the official one for the game in progress.
- 4) If time allows prior to the game, the visiting team can use the infield for practice from twenty five to fifteen minutes prior to game time. After that the home team has the field to warm-up the last 10 minutes prior to game start. Prior to twenty five minutes before the game, any team may use the field for warm-ups, but must give it up if the previous condition applies. This gives each team ten minutes for infield warm-ups.
- 5) The coaches and umpire will meet at home plate **five (5) minutes prior to the start of the game** to go over any rule clarifications or any other questions or concerns that may come up.
- 6) Bats must be legal as per the USSSA website.
- 7) No player shall have a bat in hand in the dugout area.
- 8) There will be a maximum **of five innings** to be played or an **hour and fifteen minute time limit**.
- 9) **No new inning will be started after 1 hour.**
- 10) For the **Fall season**, the game **must stop at one hour and fifteen minutes** regardless of the point in the game and the teams must immediately clear the dugouts. For the **Spring season**, at time expiration, the inning will be completed if applicable.
- 11) For the **Fall season**, should time run out before the home team has completed its current inning, then the score will **revert back** to the last completed inning played. For the **Spring season**, scores do not revert back to the previous inning.
- 12) A half-inning consists of either five runs being scored by the offense or three outs being recorded by the defense.
- 13) **There are no protests in T-Ball.**

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Tie Breakers: (for tournament only, regular season games can end in a tie)

Should the score be tied after a regulation game is played, the following will determine the tie breaker. The winner will be determined by the following:

- a. Team with the most Defensive Put Outs – if still tied then,
- b. Team with the Least amount of Strike Outs – if still tied then,
- c. Team with the most number of home runs – if still tied then,
- d. Team with the most number of runners left on base after three outs or five runs – if still tied then,
- e. Coin Flip

Umpire:

- 1) The league will provide one umpire per game, who will be in foul territory. The umpire shall keep track of outs, strikes and number of pitches per batter.
- 2) The umpire is in charge of start and stop times of each game.
- 3) A **batted ball** that hits an umpire in foul territory is a dead ball.
- 4) A **thrown ball** that hits an umpire in fair or foul territory is 'live' and the umpire shall signal or call 'play on'.
- 5) Any time a coach wishes to review/question a call, they **MUST request time**, and have it granted before a new pitch or swing by a batter. If a ruling was made in error, it should be corrected before any further play.
- 6) The umpire may declare 'Game Over' according to **Mercy Rules** set below, however Fall games may play on for maximum instruction time.

3rd	inning	home team up by 11
4th	inning	either team down by 11
4th	inning	home team up by 6
5th	inning	either team down by 6

- 7) On balls hit to the outfield, and thrown in, the umpire will signal and/or call 'Delayed dead ball', to inform base coaches directing their runners. Ball must hit infield dirt, or infielder in the infield in umpire's opinion. There is no imaginary boundary. Advancement rules are listed below.
- 8) Umpires may remind the coach behind the plate to remove the TBALL stand when a runner may be approaching home for safety.

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Team:

- 1) WYBA uses a continuous batting order which means all players bat from the first player to the last player whether they play the field or not. The batting order does not start with the first batter at the beginning of the inning. It starts with the next batter in the order after which the previous batter had an official at bat in the prior inning.
- 2) There are no warm-up swings during T-ball. This is for safety reasons. The batter should not be allowed to touch a bat until play has completely stopped and there are no players returning to the dugout from the field of play.
- 3) Some teams have 11, 12 or 13 players. During the regular season the coach can play more than the normal 4 outfielders if the coach chooses to. All extra players must play the outfield positions. The infield can only consist of the normal six positions. This will be allowed during the post season tournament as well.
- 4) **Catchers are optional** for T-Ball. If a team does not have the proper catching equipment then the player that would play this position can play in the outfield.

Coaches:

1) Defensive Coaches

- a. **5U** – maximum of three (3) defensive coaches in the outfield while their team is in the field to help keep the players attention while the game is in progress. **NOTE:** During the post season tournament, only 2 outfield coaches will be allowed, and they must be in the grass in foul territory and not on the field of play.
- b. **6U** – maximum of three (3) defensive coaches on the field while their team is in the field. There can be a coach in right field and one in left field during the game to help keep the players attention while the game is in progress. The third coach will stand by the fence behind Home Plate to retrieve the pitched balls that are missed by the catcher, to throw back to the pitcher to speed up the game. **NOTE:** During the post season tournament, outfield coaches will be allowed, but must be in the grass in foul territory and not on the field of play.

2) Offensive Coaches

- a. **5U** - three (3) offensive coaches on the field while the offensive team is batting. One at 1st base, one at 3rd base, and one assisting the batter. The coach may place the ball on the tee and align the batter, but the batter may not swing until the umpire says "Play Ball".
- b. **6U** - three (3) offensive coaches on the field while the offensive team is batting. One at 1st and 3rd base and one to act as a pitcher\coach (if applicable). If the batter is hitting off of the tee and needs assistance, then the pitcher\coach can fill this role if needed. The coach may place the ball on the tee and align the batter, but the batter may not swing until the umpire says "Play Ball".

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- 3) There can be up to two dugout coaches\moms to keep the players attention during the game. The responsibility of these coaches is to have the batters ready to bat when it is their turn and to make sure the players stay in the dugout during the game when not playing a defensive position. Players should never touch a bat while in the dugout. **NOTE:** Each dugout must have adult supervision at all times.
- 4) Any time a coach wishes to review/question a call, they **MUST request time**, and have it granted before a new pitch or swing by a batter. If a ruling was made in error, it should be corrected before any further play.
- 5) **Only one set of eyes...** Please keep in mind that in most cases there will only be **one umpire** on the field for T-Ball games. They cannot see everything, so they will have to use their best judgment on some plays. Their ruling is final.

Offensive Instructions:

In 5U, all batters are required to hit the ball off of the tee. No coach pitching is allowed.

Any reference to Pitcher\Coach or pitches to a batter in this document refers to 6U only.

- 1) The pitcher/coach has the option to pitch to the batter a **maximum of 5 pitches** until the ball is put into play. The pitcher/coach must have one foot in contact with the pitching rubber when releasing the ball. The Pitcher Coach must exit the field of play completely upon contact by the batter. The pitcher should exit the field to the opposite side the ball is hit. Coach should exit behind the runner going to first if necessary. If the Pitcher\Coach is struck by a batted ball, and the coach made an attempt to get out of the way, the play will be dead, and replayed with the pitch not counting towards the max of 5 pitches. The Pitcher\Coach may throw from a standing or kneeling position. If, from a kneeling position, please be aware that the coach is at a greater risk of interference, should he/she not be able to get out of the way of the play.
- 2) If the coach is not pitching to a batter, they may help the batter get into the correct position. The coach may also place the ball on the tee for the batter. After placing the ball on the tee, coach move behind the umpire and the catcher in a position as to not interfere with the catcher.
- 3) If the pitcher\coach interferes with a fielder making a play, the batter\runner is automatically out and all runners must return to the base they occupied when the batter was batting.
- 4) The play is started by either the pitcher (offensive coach) pitching the ball to a batter, or the batter striking the ball while on the tee.
- 5) If the batter is hitting the ball off the tee, then play should be started by the home plate umpire saying "Play Ball". This should be done each time prior to the batter swinging at the ball on the tee. For instance, if the batter misses the ball or fouls the ball, they must reset and wait for the umpire to say "Play Ball" again before swinging.

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Batter:

- 1) The batter will get 3 attempts (swings off of the tee). If the batter fouls off the 3rd swing off a tee, the batter will be considered out.
- 2) For **6U** only - the coach can either pitch to the batter or allow the batter to hit off the tee but **NOT** both. If choosing to pitch to the batter, the coach can pitch up to **5 pitches** to the batter until the ball is put into play. If the ball is not put into play by the 5th pitch, the batter will be declared out.
- 3) A strike is counted each time the batter swings and misses the ball or if the batter hits a non-fair ball.
- 4) There should be a semi-circle line three feet in front of home plate. The ball must travel beyond this line to be counted as a fair ball. If the ball does not **completely cross this line**, it is considered a foul ball.
- 5) If the **Tball stand is knocked over** during the swing, it is a dead ball and strike. All other contact with the tee during the swing is a judgment call made by the umpire.
- 6) The batter must take a **full swing** while using the Tee. **Bunting** is not allowed, nor should a coach allow a player to attempt to “dribble” the ball off the Tee in order to get on base.
- 7) If a batter throws the bat while batting or after hitting the ball, a dead ball will be called immediately. If the thrown bat occurs prior to the final swing by the batter, they will be able continue their at bat with the swing being counted towards their swing limit. If it is the final swing of an at bat, they will be called out on strikes.
- 8) The **second thrown** bat by a team will be a team warning; **all other thrown bats will be considered an out**. Any time the umpire rules that a bat was thrown, **play will be stopped immediately** and no base runners will be allowed to advance.
- 9) If the batter swings or strikes the ball prior to the umpire declaring the go ahead to ‘Play Ball’, it is a dead ball, no play, and the swing/strike shall not count.

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Base Runner:

- 1) If a ball is hit into the outfield and the outfielder retrieves the ball and throws it toward the infield, once the ball touches the infield dirt or is touched by an infielder on the fly, the play is **considered a delayed dead ball**, although the runners may advance to the **next base** if the runner has passed a base. The runners advance at their **own peril** and a play can be made to get them out. In any case, if an attempt is made to get the runner out all runners must stop at the base they were heading to when the ball initially hit the infield dirt. No runners may advance again under any circumstance.
- 2) The base runners path is defined as the path the runner takes while going between bases and not necessarily a straight line between the bases. In most cases during Tee Ball the base path is a straight line because the runners are not very fast and usually run one base at a time, but if a runner is rounding 2nd and takes a large arcing turn heading to 3rd base, then the base path is the direct line he takes heading to 3rd base after the runner completes their turn. They cannot then make a turn to the left or right to avoid a tag by a fielder. This would then be considered out of the base path and the runner would be out. Basically, any time the runner makes a sharp turn to the left or right to avoid a tag would be considered out of the base path. The position of the fielder and runner must be taken into consideration when making such a call.
- 3) There can be **no advancement on overthrows or missed balls** other than the base they would normally obtain on a normal play.
- 4) Offensive coaches are **not allowed to touch a base runner** during a live ball in an attempt to direct the runner to a base. During the regular season, the umpires will issue **a warning** for the first occurrence. During the tournament, no warnings will be issued and the **runner will be called out**.
- 5) Once the ball reaches the infield, if a runner continues around the next base acquired, the defense may still attempt tag the runner out. If the base runner makes it safely to the next base and stops or steps on home safely, play will be stopped and the runner will be returned to the correct base. Also, if the runner returns safely to the last base touched and stops, play will be stopped.
- 6) See Scenarios section for further clarifications and examples.

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Defensive Instructions:

- 1) There can be three coaches (**5U**) and two coaches (**6U**) in the outfield area to help the outfielders keep their attention. Should a ball be hit into the outfield, a coach is not allowed to touch it. If a coach touches (accidentally or intentionally) the ball in the outfield, the batter will be **awarded a home run**. The coach can only instruct the outfielders as to what to do to get the ball back into the infield. They may not touch the outfielders to direct them to the ball.
- 2) At no time shall a defensive coach be all allowed to be in the infield during a live ball. The only coach that should ever be in the infield in fair territory during a live ball is the pitcher/coach and he must make **every effort to exit fair territory** during the play and not re-enter fair territory during a live ball.
- 3) **6U** only – The defensive coach that is behind the batter retrieving pitched ball is not allowed to coach the defense in any way. He/she is simply there to retrieve the ball and return it to the pitcher. If a ball is put in play off of the pitcher they should immediately **move towards their dugout** without providing instruction to the defense. If the batter is using the tee, they should move to their dugout.

Players:

- 1) A team may field as **few as seven players** in T-Ball. In this situation though a catcher cannot be used and must play the outfield positions. That would allow for five infielders and two outfielders. During the regular season you can play with 7 players with no penalties.
- 2) All players **must play at least one inning at an infield position** within the first 3 innings of play (3 outs or 5 runs) in every regular season game. This is a regular season requirement only, and will not be required during the spring end of season tournament.

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Pitcher\Player:

- 1) When the pitcher\coach is pitching the ball to a batter the pitcher\player needs to be on one side and behind the pitcher\coach. After the ball is released by the pitcher\coach the pitcher\player may move to any position necessary to get ready to field the ball, except to run in front of the pitcher\coach unless the ball is hit to this position. In this case, it is the pitcher\coach's responsibility to stay out of the way so as to not interfere with the player making a play.
- 2) A ball that is fielded by the pitcher\player must be thrown (overhand) if the play is at 1st, 2nd or 3rd base. The pitcher\player cannot **chase** down runners going to these bases. The pitcher\player can chase and tag out the runner going from 3rd base to home plate or make a force out at home plate, **provided there is no catcher**. If a catcher is in place, the pitcher must throw the ball to the catcher. This is to keep the bigger players from chasing down the smaller players, as well as teaches them to throw the ball.
- 3) The pitcher **can** make a play on a batter running to first if the pitcher fields the ball to the 1st base side of the mound and can easily tag the runner in a **natural play**. They may not, however, **chase** the runner to first base. This is an umpire's discretion.
- 4) See Scenarios section for further clarifications and examples.

Catcher:

- 1) Catchers must wear a protective cup if male. The catcher must wear catchers gear to play this position. This must include the dangling throat protector on the catcher's mask as well as the chest protector, leg protectors and cup. If any of this equipment is not worn by the catcher, then the position of catcher will not be allowed and an extra outfielder will be used.
- 2) It is not necessary for the catcher to use a catcher's mitt in Tee Ball.
- 3) While the Pitcher/Coach is pitching to a batter, the catcher shall take his/her normal position behind the plate in a squat position. If the batter is hitting off of the tee, the catcher must stand behind the plate.
- 4) If the coach chooses, the team may play **without a player at the catcher's position**. The player who would normally play the catcher's position **can play as another outfielder**.

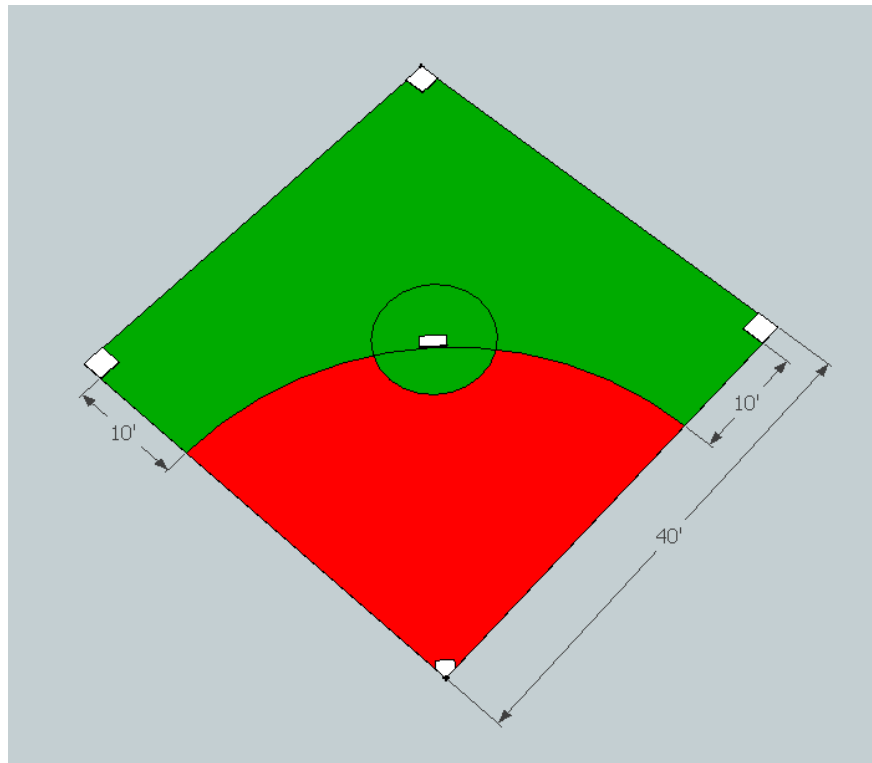
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Infielders:

- 1) The pitcher\player must stand behind and to one side of the pitcher\coach. This should be behind the pitching rubber as well but off to the side and not directly behind the pitcher\coach.
- 2) The pitcher must remain completely in the pitchers circle until the ball is struck.
- 3) The 1st, 2nd, 3rd and short stop fielders cannot advance closer than the distance from home plate to the pitching rubber towards home plate until the ball is hit. (see diagram below)
- 4) Once the ball is in the possession of an infielder, play can be stopped should the player not throw the ball. For instance, there is a runner on 1st base and the batter hits the ball to the short stop. Should the short stop field the ball and hold it the runner that was on 1st base must stop at 2nd base and the batter must stop at 1st base. Even if the fielder throws the ball, resulting in an overthrow, a batted ball that did not make it to the outfield limits runners to advance one base only.
- 5) See Scenarios section for further clarifications and examples.

Restricted area prior to the ball being put into Play

The following diagram shows the player restricted area, prior to a ball being put into play. No defensive player may be in the red area until a batted ball is put into play. This is for the safety of the players.



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Outfielders:

- 1) Outfielders must be on the grass area of the outfield and not on the dirt of the infield when the ball is hit. (There can be exceptions to this depending on the field being played on, if agreed by both coaches and/or umpire(s) and ruled before game time.
- 2) An outfielder **must throw the ball to the infield** to stop play. If the outfielder moves into the dirt to make a play, they must still throw the ball to an infielder to stop the play. If the outfielder is just holding the ball one step in the dirt, base runners are still able to advance until the ball is thrown and either touched by an infielder or hit the infield dirt after the throw was made.
- 3) Outfielders must be at a minimum of five (5) feet into the grass prior to the ball being put into play. (see the above possible exception)
- 4) See Scenarios section for further clarifications and examples.

After the Game Information:

- 1) After the game the teams should line up to shake hands\high five and greet with something to the effect of “Good Game”. This is normally done by the home team starting on the 1st base side and the visiting team on the 3rd base side and the teams meeting in a line at the pitchers rubber. The coaches can either lead or follow the line although it is preferred to lead the line so that the players would have an example to follow. If possible, please listen for any derogatory comments by players that show poor sportsmanship. If it is your player, please have a conversation with them to explain the importance of good sportsmanship. If it is the opposing team’s player, please let the coach of that team know as well.
- 2) After the greeting, please clear the dugout as soon as possible for the next game if there is one.
- 3) Throw away any trash left in the dugout.
- 4) If your game is the last game, the **home team** is responsible for taking the bases to the Lock Box. Please place base plugs into holes when removing bases.
- 5) **Enter your score on the Wylie Baseball website** (Spring Season only). Either coach can enter the score on the website but it is the home team’s responsibility since they are the team keeping the official books. Once a score is entered neither coach can edit the score. In the event that an error is made, **contact your league director** to correct the score.
- 6) Please communicate any game or player issues to the league director, President or VP of WYBA.

President	Lance Wallace	lance.wallace@deltaww.com
VP Operations	Stephen Pilant	spilantjr@msn.com
5U Director	Tyler Hamilton	Wyba-tball5@hotmail.com
6U Director	Gary Green	Gary_green@verizon.net

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Scenarios and Examples:

- 1) **Overhand throws only in most cases.** In most cases an infielder is expected to throw the ball in a normal overhand throwing motion to make a play on a runner. The intent of the rule is to teach the kids the proper throwing motion and prevent a player from fielding a ball and rolling it to a base to gain an out.

If, in the umpire's discretion, the player was too close to throw the ball in an overhand motion without potentially causing injury to another player, the player may flip the ball in a underhand motion to make the play. For purposes of clarification let's assume that the pitcher fields a ball a few feet from first base and flips the ball to the 1st baseman covering the bag. If an out is made at 1st base, the play should stand. If, however the pitcher fields the ball, in the circle, for example, and the pitcher runs to within 3 feet of 1st base and flips the ball and an out is made, the base runner should be awarded 1st base as the pitcher should have made an overhand throw from the area that the ball was caught. In this example 3 feet was used as an example only, please remember that the umpire has sole discretion on the play.

- 2) **Interference and obstruction – Always at the discretion of the umpire. (Please keep in mind, this is T-ball and these are little kids, still learning)**
- a. **Interference** – interference occurs when a base runner prevents a fielder making an attempt on a batted ball. Once the fielder makes an attempt on the ball, the ball is no longer considered a batted ball, and if the base runner runs into the fielder then there is no inference on the play. If Inference is called, the play is dead, the runner is out. The batter-runner is awarded first base and all other runners must return to the base they occupied at the time the ball was put into play.
- i. **Example 1** – A ball is hit off of the tee, the first baseman is playing behind the bag at first. The base runner from first leaves on contact and is stuck by the batted ball or runs into the 1st baseman prior to being fielded by the first baseman. If, in the view of the umpire, the first baseman could have made a reasonable attempt at making the play, then the runner leaving first would be called out. The batter would go to first and all other runners would return to the base they occupied at the time the ball was put into play.
 - ii. **Example 2** – Same thing except the first baseman is in front of the bag at first. The ball goes between the first baseman's legs and strikes the runner leaving first base. In this case the runner at first is not called for inference and the play continues.
 - iii. **Example 3** – If the 1st baseman is playing even with the bag and only a couple of feet from 1st base and does not give the base runner the proper amount of room to avoid contact, this may not be considered Interference by the umpire and in fact may be called against the defense for obstruction.
- b. **Obstruction** – obstruction occurs when a fielder, not making a play on a batted ball, impedes the runner from advancing. In this case, if a play is not being made directly on the impeded runner, play can continue and the umpire can award additional bases to

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the runner at the conclusion of the play. If a play is being made on the impeded runner, then play should be called dead and the runner is awarded the next base.

- i. **Example 1** – Bases Loaded - A batter hits the ball off of the tee against a team with no catcher, both the third baseman and the pitcher charge the ball. The pitcher gets the ball and both the pitcher and the third baseman continue to the plate. The third baseman (without the ball) bumps into the runner going home. If, in the view of the umpire the runner would have reached home before the pitcher (with the ball), then obstruction can be called, the run is scored, and no out is awarded to the defense. If, however, the umpire does not feel that the runner would have beat the pitcher to the plate, the out is recorded and obstruction is not called.
 - ii. **Example 2** – no one on. Batter hits a ball to the outfield and while rounding first, he runs into the 1st baseman and falls down. This would be considered a delayed dead ball. The runner may continue to advance as far as he can on the play. Once the play is over the umpire can award as many bases as deemed appropriate. In this example the runner makes it to third as the ball hits the infield, the umpire, may determine that the player would have already been around 3rd base, if the Obstruction had not occurred and the player may be awarded home, thus awarding the batter with a homerun. In the event the umpire determines the player would have only reached third base without being obstructed, and the player continues to home and attempts to score and is tagged out on the play, the out can be recorded for the defense.
- 3) **Outfielder fielding the ball in the infield** – outfielders may not force a runner out at a base or tag a runner out from a batted ball. They must throw the ball to an infielder to stop the runners from advancing, just like if they were standing in the grass.
 - 4) **Infielders fielding a ball in the infield** – From a batted ball, each baseman (1st, 2nd, 3rd, catcher) may tag their own base to force a runner out as well as tagging a runner out between bases. The shortstop can force a runner out at second base without throwing the ball. The shortstop may not field a ball and run to 3rd base to force the runner out. In this case they must throw the ball to 3rd or tag the runner to record the out. The pitcher must throw the ball to a base to record the out and may not chase down runners with the exception of home. A pitcher may field the ball and run to home plate and force out the runner (if applicable) or tag the runner. Again, **this only applies to the batted ball.**
 - 5) If the ball is thrown in from the outfield, then any infielder can tag a runner out. The intent of this rule is to teach the kids to make the proper throws to the proper base to record an out and to prevent the more advanced kids from making all of the defensive plays. It is a team game and all kids need to be involved in the game.
 - 6) **Infield Fly?** There are no infield flies in Tee Ball. Even though the infield fly rule is not called, the same rules apply to any fly ball that is caught.
 - a. **Example 1** – a fly ball is hit to and caught by the shortstop. Base runners must tag up prior to advancing.
 - 7) **Tag or No Tag** – a fielder must tag the player with the ball or with the glove (if the ball is in the glove) to record an out. Tagging a running with an empty glove is not considered a tag.

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- 8) **Stay or Go** – Runner on 1st and 3rd, one out. A ball is hit back to the pitcher. The runner at first must advance to 2nd. The runner at third is held at third until the ball is thrown by the pitcher to first. The player may advance home and score as long as they do so prior to an overthrow occurring. Once the overthrow has occurred a delayed dead ball is in effect and any runner that was attempting to advance from the base they occupied at the time the ball was put into play by the batter, may continue to advance. If the runner at third was simply standing on the base at the time of the overthrow, they must remain at third base. If they were attempting to advance home prior to the ball entering into foul territory, then they can continue at their own risk.
- 9) **Only one set of eyes...** Please keep in mind that in most cases there will only be **one umpire** on the field for T-Ball games. They cannot see everything, so they will have to use their best judgment on some plays. Their ruling is final.