

MACHINE PITCH GAME RULES

Effective 2025

1. The catcher must wear full protective gear and position behind home plate.
2. All bats must be labeled USA Baseball.
3. A batting order of every player on the official team roster who is present shall be made before the game and used throughout the game unless illness or injury incapacitates a player. Players arriving after the game begins shall be added at the end of the batting order.
4. Each team must have seven (7) players to begin a game. No penalty will be assessed a team playing with only seven (7) players.
5. Each player must play at least two (2) innings in the field. The penalty for violation of this rule is that the player in question must start and play nine (9) consecutive outs in the field in the next scheduled game, unless injury occurs to that player. It is recommended that all players play an equal number of innings except for disciplinary reasons or injury.
6. Each team may have a maximum of one (1) head coach and three (3) assistant coaches and approved by the league. No other helpers will be allowed on the playing field during the game. The coaches must remain in the dugout except the two base coaches and the pitching coach of the offensive team. Base coaches must remain in the coaching boxes. Coaches of the defensive team may not leave the dugout area unless granted permission by the Umpire-In-Chief. (Exception: One defensive coach will stand behind the catcher to retrieve a passed or foul balls to speed up the game but may not coach players on the field.)
7. All coaches must complete a background check and subsequently be approved by the league before any involvement with the team.
8. At least one adult coach is required in the dugout at all times.
9. Any batter, whom, in the umpire's judgment, intentionally bunts the ball, shall be called out. The ball is dead on such a play.
10. An offensive team coach will feed the baseball into the machine.
11. The front legs of the pitching machine shall be minimally 35 feet from the back of home plate. Pitching machine speed will be 32 to 36 mph.
12. The infield fly rule will NOT be in effect.
13. Each batter will be limited to five (5) pitches, unless the batter strikes out swinging before five (5) pitches. If the batter hits the fifth pitch foul, he continues to bat until he reaches base safely, is put out or misses a pitch.
14. No bunting will be allowed. All hit balls must be on top of or pass the 10' arch in front of home plate.
15. Once the pitching coach receives the ball from any player and/or time is called, no runner may advance until play resumes.
16. After a ball is hit into fair play, THE PITCHING COACH CANNOT COMMUNICATE WITH OR COACH BASE RUNNERS. He is allowed to talk to and coach the batter at the plate prior to the pitch. The pitcher coach must be silent once the ball is put into play. The base coaches will properly perform their base coaching roles.
17. If a batted ball hits the pitching machine or the pitching coach, it will be a dead ball and the pitch will not be counted as a strike. The cord is considered part of the field and play will continue if a batted ball or thrown ball hits the cord.
18. The pitching coach must remain behind the pitching machine until the half inning ends.
19. The player in the pitcher's position must remain within one (1) step of the pitching and have 1 foot inside the dirt of the pitching circle.
20. Base runners may not leave their bases until the ball reaches home plate. Stealing is allowed, except for home base. A batter leaving the base early is returned back to the base by the Umpire. If multiple violations occur, the Umpire may call the player out for leaving early.
21. Only five (5) runs per half inning are allowed and that half inning shall end with the fifth run scored. All runners must touch the bases they are forced to on any play in which the fifth run scores. If the fifth run of an inning should score on a home run hit over the outfield fence, all runs scoring on the home run shall be counted.
22. All games shall be six (6) innings and be played in full, unless shortened by time limit, run limit, weather conditions or because the home team does not need to score in the bottom of the inning in order to win. Start time will be determined by the schedule for the field where the game is to be played. All games played will have a one hour time limit. The next inning begins when the home team has made its third out. Innings begun must be completed unless it is impossible for one of the teams to win. No mercy rule, games are played for 6 innings or until the time limit has expired.

23. No runner may advance from third base to home plate unless he is able to score on a play started by a batted ball or catcher's interference.
24. A regulation game normally played with nine (9) players can be played with eight (8) players. There is no penalty for playing with eight (8) players. If a player arrives after the start of the game, he will become the ninth batter and take his turn at bat.