



**INSTRUCTIONAL COED
COACH PITCH
LEAGUE RULES
Fall 2020 (Ages 7-8)**

All players must be 7 by Sept. 1, 2020

I. Philosophy

- a. The Livonia Parks & Recreation Coach Pitch program is an instructional recreational league built around teaching participants the fundamentals for baseball and softball and a love for the game. No score shall be kept for any scrimmage.
- b. All aspects of this league must operate around the concept of fair play and equal playing time for all participants. Players should be given a chance to play every position throughout the season.
- c. All players, managers, and assistant managers shall always observe good sportsmanship and conduct. No yelling at the coaches or opposing team.
- d. Defensive plays should be rewarded by calling outs. When the batter or baserunner is out, congratulate the player on the effort and explain they are out and why they are out.

II. COVID-19 Guidelines

- a. Coaches are required to wear masks during all practices and scrimmages.
- b. Players are highly encouraged to wear masks during practices and scrimmages but not required.
- c. Social distancing is encouraged during all drills and practices sessions.
- d. Players on the bench will be spaced six feet apart at designated markers.
- e. Participants need to supply their own baseball/softball glove, pants, active shoes, and batting helmet for all practices and scrimmages.
- f. Players are discouraged from sharing equipment unless from the same household.
- g. Any equipment provided by Livonia Parks and Recreation used during practices and/or scrimmages must be sanitized by the coaches between individual uses by players or coaches.
- h. There will not be a catcher's position for the Fall 2020 season. Coaches are asked to play the position to minimize the use of shared equipment.
- i. All equipment for practices and scrimmages will be checked out from Livonia Parks and Recreation staff.
- j. All games are to be played at the fields directly east of the Kirksey Recreation Center.
- k. Spectators must sit in the designated seating areas and bring their own seating. They are encouraged to social distance

III. Equipment

- a. All players will be provided with a hat and team shirt. All players must provide their own glove and active pants for all practices and scrimmages.
 - i. Participants must provide their own glove, shoes, pants, and batting helmet.
- b. All players must wear some type of active shoe while participating in the Coach Pitch League. No metal cleats are allowed.
 - i. Tennis shoes, running shoes, or plastic, molded cleats are highly encouraged.
- c. Batting helmets are required to bat in the coach pitch league. Participants must provide their own batting helmet.
- d. Participants can use their own bat if they choose to do so.
- e. Livonia Parks & Recreation will provide bats, balls, and catcher's equipment for the Coach Pitch League.

IV. Game Format

- a. Each game will consist of six (6) innings or 1 hour and 10 minutes played, whichever comes first.

- b. Each team's turn at bat will end when three (3) outs have been made or six (6) players have batted, whichever comes first.
- c. All players must be listed in the batting order and the team must bat all the way through the lineup.
 - i. The batting order cannot change once the scrimmage has begun except to add players coming late.
 - ii. Any player arriving after the start of the scrimmage must be added to the end of the lineup.
 - iii. If player(s) show up for scrimmages after the start of the third inning the coach will not be required to play said player(s) in a defensive position.
- d. Coaches and/or parent volunteers will serve as umpires for their own team.
- e. Each team may field a maximum of 10 players, but no less than 9 players.
 - i. Managers may borrow or loan players for defensive purposes only.
 - ii. Defensive players may be substituted freely on dead ball situations or between innings.
 - iii. All players should be rotated through different positions each inning based upon number of players present at the game.
 - 1. Playing time must be shared as equally as possible among all players, regardless of skill level.
- f. The away team listed shall bat first and sit in the first base dugout.
- g. The home team listed shall bat second and sit in the third base dugout.

V. General Gameplay Rules

- a. Base distance for the Coach Pitch League shall be fifty (50) feet.
 - i. The home team is responsible for laying the bases prior to the game.
- b. Base stealing is not allowed. Base runners may not leave until the ball is hit.
 - i. A runner leaving the base early shall be instructed to return to the base.
- c. If a runner misses a base, they must return to touch the base once the ball is dead, prior to returning to their base and instructed as to why they had to return to touch the base.
- d. One extra base is allowed on overthrown balls that travels out of play or strikes any object out of play.
 - i. The ball is dead when it travels out of play or strikes any object out of play and runners may not advance other than the extra base listed above.
- e. All defensive players assigned to the pitcher position must position themselves at 38 feet from home plate and may not move forward until the pitch has been thrown.
- f. All outfield players must start at least 20 feet behind the bases.
- g. The infield fly rule shall **NOT** be in effect for the Coach Pitch League.
- h. Coaches must encourage defensive players to make plays by throwing the ball and not by running with the ball.
 - i. If in the opinion of the coach a player should have thrown the ball the base runner will be called safe.
 - ii. EXAMPLE: Second baseman fields a ground ball near second base and runs to first base for the force out – runner will be called safe.
- i. All players must play defense at least two (2) innings and no player may play the same defensive position more than three (3) innings.

VI. General Batting Rules

- a. The batter is entitled to the maximum of 6 pitches or an out, whichever occurs first. If on the 3rd swing or the sixth pitch the ball is missed, the batter is out.
- b. Coaches shall pitch to their own team from a minimum distance of 32 feet away.
 - i. The ball can be pitched overhand or underhand.
 - ii. To keep the game pace, the coaches should have multiple balls with them at the mound.
- c. Bunting is **NOT** allowed in the Coach Pitch Program.
- d. Throwing of any bat is not allowed. Coaches must warn teams at the beginning of each game.

- i. Any player throwing their bat after the warning shall automatically be declared out.
- e. Any ball must travel at least ten (10) feet from home plate in order to be considered a fair ball.
 - i. If the ball does not travel the required distance or is fielded inside that distance, it shall be called a foul ball.

VII. Field Conduct:

- a. No tobacco use of any kind allowed on the playing field or player's bench. This rule applies to all coaches.
- b. No alcoholic beverages are allowed at any time by coaches or spectators.

VIII. Instructional Youth Rainouts & Makeups

Practices that are rained out will not be rescheduled. Teams will have a maximum of two scrimmages which are rained out made up. Those scrimmages will be played the Tuesday and Thursday directly following the last week in the scrimmage schedule.

Unless cancelled by Livonia Parks & Recreation, all decisions regarding cancellations for practices and scrimmages will be at the discretion of the coaches.

The Department of Parks and Recreation reserves the right to make decisions it feels are in the best interest of the league.

IX. Behavioral Guidelines

Like other kinds of human interaction, coaching involves people trying to influence others in desired ways. There are two basic approaches to influencing people:

1. One approach, which we call the positive approach, is designed to strengthen desirable behaviors by motivating people to perform them.
2. The second approach, the negative approach, involves attempts to eliminate negative behaviors using punishment and criticism. The motivating factor in the second approach is fear.

Both approaches are used by coaches, but there are a number of reasons why the positive approach is preferred. First, it works much better! Second, it creates an enjoyable climate.

Here are some tips on motivating young athletes:

1. DO:

- a. ENCOURAGE immediately after mistakes.
 - i. That's when the athlete needs encouragement most. If you are sure the player knows how to correct the mistake, then encouragement alone is sufficient.
- b. When appropriate, give CORRECTIVE INSTRUCTION, but ALWAYS do so in an encouraging manner.
 - i. Do this by emphasizing not the error that just occurred, but the improvement that will follow if the player accepts your instruction (the "why" of it).
 - ii. This will make the player positively self-motivated to correct the mistake rather than negatively motivated to avoid failure and your disapproval.

2. DON'T:

- a. Give corrective instructions in a hostile or harsh manner. That is, avoid PUNITIVE INSTRUCTION.
 - i. This is more likely to increase frustration and create resentment than to improve performance. Don't let your good intentions in giving instruction be self-defeating.