

Official World T-Ball Rules

T-Ball is a game of baseball between two teams of eleven players, with a sufficient number of alternates under the direction of a manager and coaches played in agreement with the playing rules under the authority of an umpire or umpires on a recommended T-Ball field.

It is designed to get young children interested in the game of baseball by stressing and maintaining active participation of all the players: with mandatory alternation of players at a game with the offensive team utilizing the eleven players as batters to score as many runs as possible and the defensive team using two extra outfielders to make as many outs as possible in accordance with the rules.

Last Update: March 9, 2026

Rule 1: Regulations

1-1 Official Playing Rules

T-Ball is a game of baseball played in accordance with the Little League Playing Rules with exceptions listed in these rules.

1-2 Players

Any player between the ages of 6 and 8 years in accordance to the Little League age line outlined in the Little League Playing Rules shall be eligible to compete in T-Ball. The exception will be that female players will be allowed to play provided they will not attain the age of 9 during the tournament.

1-3 Teams

Each team may have a manager and three coaches with a maximum roster of 20 players. For Tournament play a team may have a maximum roster of 16 players and a minimum of 11. A bat boy must be appointed from the members of the current game line-up. No other is permitted.

Rule 2: Equipment

2-1 The Playing Field:

The regulation T-Ball field for Tournament play shall be laid out in agreement with measurements given (see Appendix A).

- a) The distance between all bases shall be 60 feet.
- b) The distance between the point of home plate and the pitcher's rubber shall be 46 feet.
- c) The infield arc, is a line dividing the infield playing area from the outfield. It has a 50-foot radius from the center of the pitcher's plate extending from foul line to foul line.

2-2 Catcher:

The catcher must be fully equipped with a chest guard, leg guards, and an appropriate catcher's mask, the catcher may remove their mask while making a play.

2-3 Pitcher:

The pitcher must wear a caged pitchers/batters helmet at all times while in position and during play.

Penalty: On last batter if the pitcher removes their helmet the umpire will call the time, inning will be over and allow all legal runs to score, if the pitcher removes their helmet during regular play the defensive team will have the option to either take a ground rule double or accept the result of the play.

Rule 3: Definitions

3-1 Playing Line – is an imaginary line running directly from first base to third base which is a guide line for the Plate Umpire to determine a fair hit ball.

3-2 A Fair Hit Ball – is a legally batted ball that in the plate umpire's opinion will or could have firmly crossed the playing line in fair territory even if it is fielded before crossing the line.

3-3 A Dead Hit Ball – is a legally batted ball that:

- a) In the umpire's opinion will not or could not have firmly crossed the playing line, even if fielded on or in front of the playing line.

Approved Ruling: If caught in the air in front of the playing line, the batter shall be declared out. However, if a play is made on the ball and it is not caught, it shall be the umpire's discretion as to whether the ball would have firmly crossed the playing line untouched and to call the ball dead.

- b) In the umpire's opinion the batter has made an illegal swing (Rule 3-9).

3-4 A Strike is When –

- a) The ball is swung at by the batter and is completely missed.

Note: This may occur with the batter missing the ball completely underneath and making contact with the tee.

- b) The ball is dead hit, or fouled by the batter when he has less than two strikes.

3-5 A Fielder's Choice –

When any defensive player has control of the ball in the infield area (Rule 3-6) and in the judgement of the plate umpire there is no attempt to make a play on any of the base runners. TIME WILL BE CALLED, and the base runners, in the judgement of the umpires based on the natural result of the play will be held on the base they last occupied or moved to the unoccupied base they were approaching when time was called.

Note: A player raising his hand with the ball therein, above his head, will not automatically obtain a call of time by the umpire.

Note 2: If a hit ball leaves the infield area, the defensive team must attempt throw the ball over the infield line.

Approved Ruling: If the ball is not thrown over the infield line and time is called runners will be moved, in the judgment of the umpire, to the unoccupied base they were approaching or an additional base immediately after.

Note 3: If in the judgement of the umpire, the defensive team on a overthrow does not make an effort to get an out, they have conceded the following base to the batter and any forced runners.

Note 4: If in the judgement of the umpire, the offensive team is taking advantage of a player that cannot physically make a play (i.e. running when the ball is fumbled, dropped or is just behind a fielder), the offensive team will be held at the current base, unless the defensive team attempts to gain the out.

3-6 Infield Area –

Is the area in the judgement of the plate umpire in which the defensive infielders would normally play in performance of their duties. The infield is to be distinguished from the outfield via an arc, 50 feet from the pitcher's plate (see Field Diagram) or on most diamonds, where the outfield grass meets the infield material. It also includes the adjacent foul territories which are encompassed by the playing line being extended to the playing field boundaries (see Field Diagram).

3-7 An Appeal –

Must be made by a Player or Manager before “Play” is called for the next batter in the case of the last batter, it must be made before the last defensive player is off the playing field.

3-8 Lead Off –

When a runner is off his base when the batter hits the ball off the Tee.

3-9 Illegal Swing –

When the batter does not take a full swing or chop swings downward at the ball.

Note: Shall be called a dead ball for the purposes of these rules.

Rule 4: General Rules

4-1 In T-Ball there shall be no pitching to the batter, therefore no bases may be awarded on balls, there is no bunting and the infield-fly rule does not apply.

4-2 Each team shall have a starting line-up of eleven players but if due to unavoidable circumstances either team has less than eleven players but not less than nine, the game shall be played with an equal number of players on each team.

If at the times a game is scheduled to begin, a team does not have a minimum of 9 playable players on their lineup, a maximum extension of 15 minutes will be allowed before the tournament director declares the game a forfeit to the non-offending team.

Note 1: A team’s roster is the list of players on the team including injuries. A team’s lineup is the 11 or more players eligible to play in the game.

Note 2: For Tournament games each team’s roster must show eleven players and a minimum of two alternates.

Approved Ruling: In the event that one team has less than 11 players on their lineup for the game, when batting, the team will bat their regular lineup, followed by the first batter or first two batters again depending on the number of batters required to maintain an 11 player batting lineup. In the next inning, the batting order will run through as normal with the second batter hitting a second time (third and fourth batters if the team is playing with 9 players). This pattern will continue until the sixth batter has hit twice in one inning, then reverting back to the first batter. This extra batter (or batters) will be inserted before the last batter to keep the last batter consistent throughout the game.

4-3 All players listed in the game lineup in which their team is participating must be scheduled to play in at least three innings of a five inning game. It is compulsory that players play a complete inning when alternated and must be put in at the beginning of an inning unless an injury occurs.

4-4 A player must be listed to bat in the same batting position for each inning. The original substitute players may enter the line up in any position in each inning in or after the second inning. The replaced player must return to their original spot in the order (see Appendix B).

After the game begins, changes or additions to this line-up must be made before the plate umpire calls ‘Play’ for the first batter at the beginning of a half inning, except in the case of injury or sickness. All line up changes must be reported to the plate umpire, the scorekeeper and the opposing manager.

Approved Ruling: In the second inning- Player 12 who was on the bench in the first inning, enters the game in the seventh batting spot for Player 7. In the third inning, Player 7 returns to the batting order in their original seventh batting position, and Player 12 may substitute for any other player in the line up- the manager decides to put Player 12 into the eighth batting spot for Player 8. In the fourth inning Player 8 returns to the batting order in their original eighth batting spot, and Player 12 may substitute for any other player in the line up.

4-5 Each defensive team shall have:

- a) A catcher- who shall play a position normally taken by the catcher behind home plate, far enough back so he does not interfere with the batter while batting.
- b) A pitcher- who shall play in the field and must assume a set position directly behind the pitcher's plate with both feet touching but not in front of the pitcher's plate or with one foot touching and the other foot directly behind the pitcher's plate until the ball is hit.
- c) A 1st baseman, a 2nd baseman, a 3rd baseman and a short stop who shall play in positions regularly played by these infielders and they shall not cross the playing line until the ball is hit. The 1st and 2nd baseman shall play on the first-base side of second base and the 3rd baseman and short-stop shall play on the third-base side of second base.

Penalty: An appeal may be made by the offensive team in the event a defensive player does cross the playing line, if the appeal is successful the batter may re-hit.

- d) In the area regularly played by outfielders and they shall not cross into the infield area until the ball is hit. A left-center fielder who shall play between the left and center-fielders and a right-center fielder who shall play between the center and right-fielders.

Penalty: An appeal may be made by the offensive team in the event a defensive player does cross into the infield area, if the appeal is successful the batter may re-hit.

- e) A maximum of four adults in the dugout
- f) Once a player assumes a defensive position at the start of an inning, they may not be assigned another position in the field during that inning.

4-6 The offensive team shall have two adults (a manager and coach) in the dugout and will be allowed two coaches in the coaching boxes, one near first base and one near third base. Coaches shall-

- a) Be adults (manager or coaches)
- b) Remain within the coach's box at all times
- c) Not physically assist any runner while the ball is in play.

Penalty: The play is immediately called dead, any outs made will stand and umpires place all other players to position at time of infraction unless forced to the next base by the batter who is always awarded at least first (unless put out before infraction), runs already scored before infraction are allowed to score.

- d) Talk to members of his own team only
- e) Have at least one coach in the dugout at all times
- f) Teams may have a bat boy, provided that they are a rostered member of the league, wear a batting helmet when on the playing field, and listen to the instruction of the umpires.

4-7 A Complete Game-

- a) Will consist of five complete innings, provided one team has scored more runs than the other. If the score is tied at the end of five innings, in a preliminary game, the score will end in a tie. If the score is tied in an elimination game, play is continued until one team has scored more runs than the other in an equal number of innings or when the home team has scored the winning run in the last inning.

Note: If a 6th inning occurs, lineups will revert back to the first inning lineups. If a 7th inning is required, second inning lineups will be used, and so on.

- b) In the event the umpire terminates the game before the end of the fifth inning and there has been at least three completed innings played, the score will revert back to the last completed inning in the following situations:
- The visiting team scores one or more runs to tie the score or take the lead in the uncompleted inning and the home team does not score enough runs to tie the score or retake the lead.
- c) A preliminary game that is tied after three or more completed innings and halted by the umpire shall be a complete game and declared a tie. If it is an elimination game, the game will be resumed from the exact point play was halted.
- d) In tournament play if a game is halted before it is a regulation game but at least one inning has been completed the game will continue from the exact point play was halted. If only part of the first inning has been played when the game was halted, then it will have to be replayed from the beginning.
- e) If it becomes mathematically impossible for the trailing team to score enough runs to tie or win the game.
- f) Once a player assumes a defensive position at the start of an inning, they may not be assigned another position in the field during that inning.

Approved Ruling: If a player becomes injured during the defensive inning, they may be replaced by any player currently on the bench. They must replace the injured defensive player in their original position. In the judgement of the umpire, the defense may be allowed to swap players' defensive situation due to injury.

Rule 5: Playing Rules

5-1 To begin the game, the plate umpire shall instruct the home team to take their positions in the field, place the tee, of batting team's choice, on home plate and call PLAY for the first batter of the offensive team.

Note: The ball must be placed on the tee over the plate, the tee however does not have to be centered over home plate.

5-2 The end of a play occurs when TIME is called by an umpire, see Rule 3-5 A Fielder's Choice.

5-3 If an offensive runner has led off play will be allowed to continue, at the end of the play the batter will re-hit and runners will return to their bases.

Penalty: All outs made will stand, if the batter is put out the next batter will hit.

Note: This does not apply if the last batter is hitting.

5-4 The offensive teams turn at bat ends when-

- a) The last batter has three strikes called.
- b) The last batter has made an illegal hit.
- c) The last batter's fair hit ball is returned to the catcher at home plate.

The ball must be thrown over the playing line at least once on its way to the catcher.

Penalty: In the event a throw is not made across the playing line all legal runs will score.

Home plate must be touched by ONLY the catcher with the ball in his possession and only the pitcher is allowed to assist the catcher in the home plate area (see Field Diagram for explanation of the home plate area).

Penalty: In the event a defensive player other than the pitcher, in the judgement of the umpire crosses into the home plate area (see Appendix A), the umpire will call the time, inning will be over and allow all legal runs to score.

Approved Ruling: In the event the pitcher fields a live ball on or in front of the playing line or retrieves a thrown ball that died between the bases and the playing line which was intended to cross the playing line, they may return the ball to the catcher without having to throw it over the playing line.

- d) A base runner with last batter status, is hit by a fair batted ball either on or off his base, before the ball is touched by the pitcher or before it has touched or gone through an infielder not including the pitcher, the ball is dead and no runs may score.
- e) The last batter's fly ball is legally caught and there are no runners on the bases
- f) If last batter is not announced, resulting in the last batter's run not being allowed to score and there are no runners on base (see Rule 5-8).

5-5 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 way as the last batter and no defensive play can be made on them on the bases. They are all forced to home plate when the last batter has hit the ball fairly.

5-6 In the event the last batter's fair hit ball leaves the playing field by going over the outfield fence in flight, it will be considered a home run and all runners having last batter's status will be allowed to score. But if the ball bounds over, goes under or gets caught in the outfield fence and in so doing interferes with the fielders' chances to field the ball, all base runners will be allowed to score but not the batter.

Note: If the defensive team throws the ball out of play, either intentionally or unintentionally, all runs will be allowed to score.

5-7 In the event that the last batter of the offensive team is out on a fly ball, the members of the offensive team who are base runners shall be permitted to score, provided they are on the base when the ball is caught or they re-touch it after the ball is caught before touching the next base. These runners have to score prior to the ball being returned to home plate.

5-8 In the event that the last batter of the offensive team or any base runner with last batter status is obstructed in any manner by a member of the defensive team while running the bases, it shall be the discretion of the umpire as to how far he would have advanced had there been no obstruction.

5-9 A run does not count when a runner with last batter status:

- a) Reaches home plate after the plate has been legally touched by the catcher.
- b) Has led off and reaches home plate safely.
- c) Has not tagged up on a caught fly ball and reaches home plate safely.

Note: b) and c) are not appeal plays, although an appeal may be made if a manager believes the above situations have occurred.

5-10 If the "last batter" is not announced, the defensive team may appeal, if successful all runners will return to their bases and the "last batter" will re-hit.

Penalty: During the re-hit, the last batter's run is ineligible to score. If the bases are empty, the inning will end.

Rule 6: Umpires

6-1 The plate umpire must make their best effort to remove the tee from home plate to prevent any interference with a play at home plate. Failure to do so will be no cause for the umpire to change the results of the play.

6-2 All umpires must make sure the infielders are all behind the playing line, the pitcher and catcher are in their proper positions and the outfielders are in the outfield area (see Field Diagram) before play is called on the next batter.

6-3 It is the duty of the Plate Umpire, after he has been notified, to call out “LAST BATTER” (for both teams to hear). Failure to do so does not nullify the play.

Rule 7: Scorekeepers

7-1 One scoresheet is needed for each game in triplicate.

Note 1: For tournament games the official scorekeeper is responsible for all copies.

Note 2: For tournament games the official scorekeeper is designated by the tournament officials or the home team.

Note 3: A lineup must be presented from each team to the official scorekeeper.

7-2 The Scoresheet-

a) The Top Line- The name of the batting team is put in the upper left hand side and the opponents on the upper right. The letter H (home) or V (Visitors) is deleted if not applicable.

b) The Columns, in order from left to right, provide the following information on the players and alternates.

i) *Batting Position Number*

ii) *Pos- Fielding Positions-* See field diagram in extreme right-hand column for numbers.

iii) *No-Players Numbers* (sweater numbers)

iv) *Players-* Batters names

v) *I.T.P.-Innings to be played*

vi) *Six Scoring Columns.* The contain diamonds for tracing out a runner’s progress as well as strike recording boxes. At the bottom of these columns there are spaces for a recording of total runs per inning and cumulative totals.

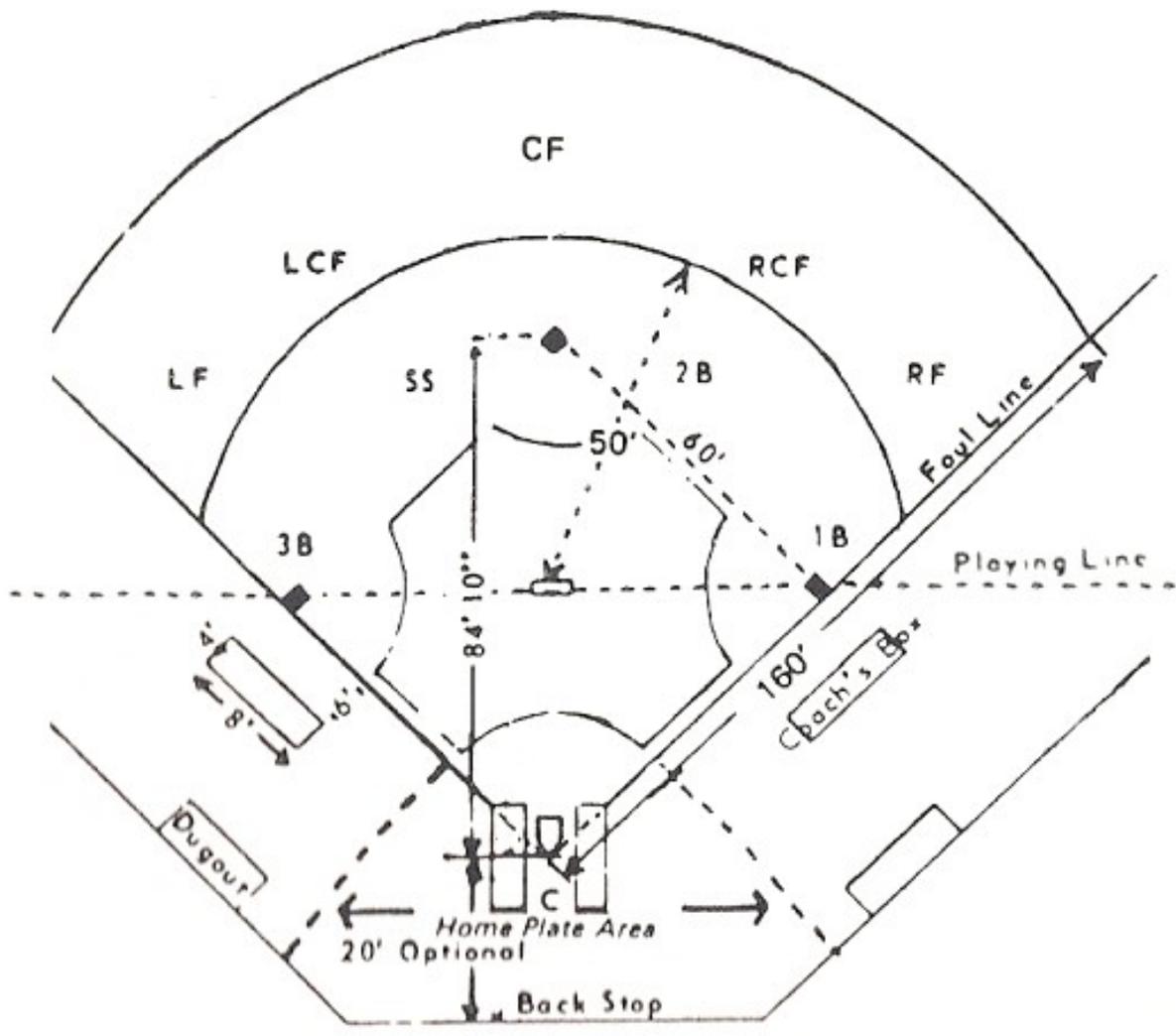
vii) *Alternates-* Players not playing in the first inning are listed as alternates (see Appendix C).

7-4 Before the game starts the scorekeeper shall check the line-ups of both teams to make certain that all players whose names appear in the opening line-up and alternates space are listed to play a minimum of two innings. Any discrepancy must be reported to the plate umpire before the game starts. The umpire will confer with the offending manager(s) to have the necessary corrections made.

7-5 Each team will have a scorekeeper, who shall inform the players of their batting positions, keep track of each player’s progress on the bases, record the number of runs scored in each inning, and record when changes are made in the line-up.

7-6 The scorekeeper of the offensive team must inform the team manager when the last batter is going to bat and the manager must then advise the Plate Umpire. If the last batter is announced in error and the batter completes his turn at bat, upon an appeal by the defensive team, the umpire will declare the batter out and return all base runners to the base they were on prior to the ball being hit, no runs will be allowed to score.

Appendix A



Appendix B

Inning 1

(No subs yet)

Batting Spot	Player
1	Adams
2	Baker
3	Carter
4	Davis
5	Evans
6	Flores
7	Garcia
8	Harris
9	Irving
10	Smith
11	King

Bench: Lewis, Martinez

Inning 2

Lewis replaces Evans (#5)

Martinez replaces Harris (#8)

Batting Spot	Player
1	Adams
2	Baker
3	Carter
4	Davis
5	Lewis
6	Flores
7	Garcia
8	Martinez
9	Irving
10	Smith
11	King

Bench: Evans, Harris

Inning 3

Evans and Harris return.

Lewis replaces Carter (#3)

Martinez replaces Smith (#10)

Batting Spot	Player
1	Adams
2	Baker
3	Lewis
4	Davis
5	Evans
6	Flores
7	Garcia
8	Harris
9	Irving
10	Martinez
11	King

Bench: Carter, Smith

Inning 4

Carter and Smith return.

Lewis replaces Garcia (#7)

Martinez replaces King (#11)

Batting Spot	Player
1	Adams
2	Baker
3	Carter
4	Davis
5	Evans
6	Flores
7	Lewis
8	Harris
9	Irving
10	Smith
11	Martinez

Bench: Garcia, King

Inning 5

Garcia and King return.

Lewis replaces Adams (#1)

Martinez replaces Flores (#6)

Batting Spot	Player
1	Lewis
2	Baker
3	Carter
4	Davis
5	Evans
6	Martinez
7	Garcia
8	Harris
9	Irving
10	Smith
11	King

Bench: Adams, Flores

Appendix C

eg.

	Pos.	No.	Players	ITP	1	2
1	4	8	T. Jones	1,2	^	^
	4	12	C. Black	3,5	<	>
					Y	Y

Summary Changes 2026

There were two rules labelled Rule 4-4, the second was changed to Rule 4-5 all following rules were fixed as well

There were two rules labelled Rule 5-8 (previously 5-7), the second was changed to Rule 5-9 (previously 5-8) all following rules were fixed as well

Added Appendix A, B, and C

Added example lineup to the Appendix as Appendix B

Added Rule 2-2

Added Rule 2-3

Added a Penalty to Rule 2-3

Added Rule 5-3

Added approved ruling to Rule 4-4

Added a Penalty to Rule 4-5 (d)

Added a Penalty to Rule 4-6(c)

Added Rule 4-6 (f)

Added Rule 4-7 (f)

Added approved ruling to Rule 4-7 (f)

Added penalty to Rule 5-4 (c) (previously 5-3 (c))

Altered Rule 3-56

Altered Rule 4-4

Altered the penalty of Rule 4-5 (c)

Altered Rule 4-5 (d)

Altered the approved ruling for Rule 5-4 (c) (previously 5-3 (c))

Altered the penalty of Rule 4-5 (c)

Altered Rule 5-10 (previously 5-9)

Moved the two notes in Rule 3-6 to 3-5 as Notes 3 and 4

Moved Field Diagram from section 2 to the appendix as Appendix A

Moved example of alternates from rule Rule 7-2 (b) *vii*) to the appendix as Appendix C