Ponder Baseball 7U T-Ball Rules 2022

**I. Official Game**

An official game is five (5) innings, but the Ponder League goes by time limit which for 7U T-Ball is one hour and ten minutes (1:10) time limit. No inning will start with eight (8) minutes or less, if the game is tied and time has expired, then the game shall be declared a tie. The only exception is a playoff game, in this case, another inning shall be played and so on until a winner has been declared.

1. A game shall become official after one inning has been completed or after 1-1/2 innings if the home team is ahead.
2. A team may start a game with no less than nine (9) players and must finish with ten (10) players by the start of the second inning. Failure to field ten (10) players by the start of the second inning is cause for forfeit.
3. The head coach must be prepared for game time 15 minutes before the designated game time with a lineup ready, once the lineup has been turned in, that is final for the duration of the game.

**II. Game Regulations**

1. The run-rule shall be 15 runs or more after one (1) inning, 12 runs after two (2) innings, 8 runs after three (3) innings, and six runs after four (4) innings.
2. Every player must play at least one (1) inning (offense and defense). Violation will result in the forfeit of that game.
3. The home team must furnish one (1) new stamped M ball per game. The game ball will be given to the umpire before the game begins and will be returned at the end of the game.
4. During the regular season, the home team is determined by the online schedule.
5. During playoffs, the top seed is the home team.
6. All players must have a numbered team jersey and cap by the third week in the season.
7. All players on the lineup card presented to the umpire must play, if that requirement is not met, a forfeit will be declared.
8. Lineup cards must reflect the player’s full name (first and last)printed legibly, plus jersey number.

**III. Batting Rules**

1. Batters can only bat once per inning. No bunting allowed.
2. All bats must be T-Ball bats and should have the USA label or USSSA thumbprint visible on the handle.
3. Bats thrown or carried completely outside the home plate diameter (circle), the runner will be declared out.

A bat partially carried or thrown out of the circle will not be declared an out.

1. Each time the team at bat makes three (3) outs, the bases are cleared of any base runners. The score will continue until the offense has run through their ten (10) player line-up. Substitutions should be placed within the second inning to comply with all rules concerning all players play offense and defense.
2. The batter can only “measure up” twice. On the third try, the batter must hit the ball past the twenty-foot arc or it will be called a strike (considered a hack). If the ball or tee is contacted and the ball is dislodged from the tee, it will be called a strike (a hack), only if the ball does not leave the twenty-foot arc.
3. One coach will be allowed to remain at the home plate outside the circle for instruction and to clear the base path when a runner is approaching. Coaches are NOT to linger in the batting circle or SLOWLY move back outside the circle.

**IV. Base Running Rules**

1. Tagging up is not allowed. Infield fly rule does not apply. The ball is live until the umpire calls “time out” or “time.”
2. A base runner will be counted out for leaving the base before the ball is hit. Stealing is not allowed.
3. Coaches that touch a runner while the ball is live will be charged with an out and the base runner removed from the base.
4. Sliding is not allowed at first base. Each team will receive a warning on the first violation and will be an out on the next violation (s). At second, third and home base, the slide rule is in effect. Runners must slide when a tag is imminent or seek to avoid contact with the fielder. Malicious contact will result in immediate suspension.
5. On a batted fair ball, all players will advance at their own risk. The runner that made the hit, plus the runners on base, may take as many bases as possible until the play is deemed complete as determined by the umpire.
6. The ball will be declared dead when the lead runner can no longer advance.
7. Out-of-Play: If throw goes out of play, one base will be awarded to the runners on base if the throw comes from the infield, two bases if it comes from the outfield.
8. When a dead ball occurs, base runners less than half the distance between the two bases must return to the base last touched. Base runners more than half the distance between the two bases must advance to the next base beyond the last touched base at the time of the declaration of the dead ball.
9. The following rules shall govern the “crash rule”: the situation involving contact between fielders and base runners at any base including home.
10. A base runner is not required to slide at any time. However, if a fielder clearly has possession of the ball and is waiting for the base runner, then it is the responsibility of the base runner to avoid contact with the fielder. If contact is made, it must be to slide.
11. A fielder cannot block the base or baseline without clear possession of the ball. When waiting for a thrown ball, the fielder (including the catcher) must be positioned behind the baseline. Straddling the base is NOT behind the baseline. A fielder can move toward the base runner only when in clear possession of the ball.

**V. Coaches**

1. The coach that meets at home plate with the umpire before the start of the game is determined to be the HEAD coach for that game. Only that HEAD coach will be allowed to approach the umpire to discuss a call.
2. The head coach of the home team must provide a game ball that is stamped by the office to play a game, with no exceptions. If you do not have a stamped game ball, that results in relinquishing your home team privileges.
3. On offense: only three coaches are allowed on the field. On defense: only four coaches (or three coaches and scorekeeper) are allowed inside the dugout. All additional coaches or team moms are to remain outside the fence. We are not allowing more than the above number on the field or ejections and forfeits will be declared.

**VI. Fielding Rules**

1. The game must be played with six (6) infielders and four (4) outfielders. All must play assigned positions. NO ROVERS
2. All players on the field will play one position per inning and cannot switch to another position until the next inning. Example: The shortstop can only play that position for the inning and only move either after the inning or if a player is hurt and substitution takes place.
3. During a play at home, the catcher must make the play and NOT any other positioned player.
4. Players must be five (5) feet apart from each other and have to play their designated position (or area). Shortstop may make the play at second but cannot cross over to the first base side to do so
5. The middle infielders (shortstop and second) may play no deeper than three (3) yards into the outfield grass.
6. Pitchers must remain in the pitcher’s circle until the ball is hit. Pitchers are required to stay on the back half of the pitching circle when the ball is in play. Pitchers can be used as a backup for any player on a base but NOT at home plate.

**VII. Penalties**

1. If a base runner contacts a fielder in clear possession of the ball other than in an attempt to slide, an immediate dead ball will be called. The base runner will be called out. If the base runner deliberately contacts the fielder with great force, the base runner is subject to ejection in addition to being called out. All other base runners are returned to the last base touched at the time of the dead ball.
2. If a fielder is blocking the baseline and does not have clear possession of the ball, any contact (other than deliberate contact by either player) shall be ruled obstruction; and bases shall be granted accordingly.
3. When the fielder, base runner, and ball arrive simultaneously at a base, the umpire will rule on any illegal or unnecessary contact that may occur. In any case, no player may initiate deliberate contact without being subject to position.
4. According to Ponder Baseball rules: If a team uses tactics that are noticeable to delay or hasten the playing of a game a forfeit may result. This means coaches, time delays like huddling and then instructing players with time still running or constant arguing judgment calls of the umpire will result in forfeit of the game. Remember each forfeit by a team result in a fine of $25 per incident to be payable before the next scheduled game or a suspension of three games for that coach if payment is not received.
5. For players to be eligible to play in playoff games at the end of the season, they must play at least 50% of the regular-season games.