

Wrentham Farm League Rules - 2018

Always: Wrentham Farm League is recreational for the kids. The goal is to have the players learn baseball and have fun.

This is a guide to go by, but use judgment to make changes for kids or teams that are more (or less) advanced.

Game Overview:

There are no standings or scores kept for the Farm League. All games will end in a tie with a traditional handshake at home plate to acknowledge a “good game” by all.

All teams are encouraged to schedule a team practice every week, when the schedule permits, in addition to the weekly “all farm league” Thursday practices.

The season will consist of ten 90 minute games. Play as many innings as possible (up to 6 innings) without starting a new inning after 75 minutes from the start.

The goal is to teach fielding, hitting, throwing/pitching, and base running fundamentals in conjunction with sportsmanship, teamwork and, above all, having fun. Players at this level should be taught the concepts of:

- Outs at bases other than first
- Force outs vs tag outs
- Fielders covering their bases
- Outfielders backing up infielders
- Outfielders throwing to 2nd
- Runners rounding first on a single, and advancing to the next base
- Recognizing strikes vs. balls
- Pitching mechanics

The Farm League is 100% over hand coached and kid pitched for the season, with no tees used under any circumstances.

Each half inning will end after the earlier of 3 outs or 7 batters. To help facilitate a faster moving game:

- Players should be ready to run on and off the field (there is no walking in baseball)
- Catchers should put gear on while his team is batting and he is on the bench.

- When possible, players should be scheduled to play in the same positions for 2 innings in a row, but no player may play the same position for more than 2 consecutive innings.

Coaching/Team Expectations:

- All teams will have one head coach and ideally at least one assistant coach for official roster purposes. Coaches are encouraged to engage parents for help on the bench and with other activities needing supervision by an adult. Parents used on a routine basis should have a CORI on file.
- During the game, a defensive coach will back-up the catcher. Their role is to collect the balls in a bucket while the pitcher uses a bucket of balls already on the mound. The catcher may throw them back as well and it is up to the player/coach pitching to decide whether he/she wants balls thrown back after each pitch or in total at the end of each at bat, or as the bucket fills
- While on offense, the offensive team is responsible to have adult coaches be available to pitch, on first and 3rd base, as well as the bench.
- The home team is responsible for delivering game balls and base placement each game.
- Junior Umpires will be responsible for field lining.
- The home team is responsible for returning all above items to the lock box and equipment trailer, as appropriate.
- Both teams are responsible for trash removal and dug-out cleaning for respective sides.
- Both teams are responsible for field maintenance (i.e.: dragging the field, field repair, mound and plate maintenance, etc...)
- Grievances with schedule, rules, etc. are to be directed to the league co-commissioners (Mark Anderson & Joe Pennini) by the official coaching staff only.

Offense:

When a ball is put in play, the batter is to run the bases as they would under “normal” game conditions.

- The batter may take more than one base only if the ball is struck well into the outfield.
- Base runners are allowed to advance a single base on an overthrown ball to 1st base only on a ball put into play. Advancing a base or bases on any other overthrown ball (i.e. any other overthrown bases or relay) is allowed until the ball is “mounded”. For balls hit to the outfield, the runners and batter may continue to advance base to base until the ball is mounded.
- All base runners are in play and may be tagged or forced out.
- There is no leading, advancement on passed balls or stealing. Advancing to the next base is only results from a hit, walk or overthrow as detailed above.

- All batters & runners are required to wear an appropriate helmet, including the one on deck.
- Feet first slides only are permitted. No head first sliding. Players need to slide to avoid tag at home plate (i.e. can not run into catcher).
- A base runner called out is to leave the field of play and return to the bench.
- All available players must be in the batting order, i.e., everybody hits even if not playing the field.
- The inning will end after 7 players get at-bats or 3 outs, whichever is first. The last inning as agreed upon by the coaches will be unlimited runs, or 3 outs, only through the batting order once.
- No bunting or slashing (i.e. presenting to bunt and then pulling back to swing) is allowed.
- No sacrifice fly balls allowed and the infield fly rule will not apply.

There is no swinging of bats in or near the dugout/bench area. Only the batter at the plate and the on-deck batter (standing outside the dugout) are allowed to swing a bat.

Defense:

Each player plays in the field, each inning. There are 6 dedicated infield positions with all other players occupying the outfield. Each player must play in the infield for at least two innings of every game and one inning in the outfield.

The infield positions are:

- First base
- Second base
- Third base
- Short Stop
- Pitcher (by name only)
- Catcher

The outfield positions are:

- Left field
- Center field
- Right field
- Right/Left-Center field
- Anything beyond 4 should be spread out throughout the outfield

Outfielders must be positioned in the outfield. Extra infielders are not allowed.

Each catcher will wear the full protective gear provided by the league in the equipment bag. Please have catchers ready between innings to keep the game moving. Optional equipment is to be considered at the parent's discretion*. Catcher's gear provided by the league includes:

- Helmet/Face Mask
- Chest Protector
- Shin Pads
- Catcher's Mitt
 - A player may choose to wear his or her own glove

*An athletic supporter is recommended for any fielding position and required for catchers.

It is recommended two coaches are in the field coaching their team playing defense.

Outs are determined by the Junior Umpire.

Close plays should go to the runner.

Teams can play with 7 players if needed. A team may have 5 outfielders due to roster size.

Coaches must try to rotate players throughout all positions during the season. No single player should be playing a specific position regularly. Coaches will use their own discretion regarding the safety of the player regarding playing pitchers, catcher and 1st base. It is recommended that player does not play as catcher for more than 3 innings a game.

Pitching:

For the first part of the season, every inning will be a combination of kid and coach pitch.

- A player starts pitching to every batter, and pitches until either the batter strikes out or hits a fair ball or draws a fourth ball (a "walk") at which time the count is erased and the coach comes in for FOUR pitches only.
- If the kid hits the ball, play resumes.
- After four good pitches, the batter takes first base (first half of year), or the batter strikes out ("second half of year").

Coaches will use common sense with this pitching approach.

- The idea is to give all kids who can reasonably reach the plate a chance to pitch. The Farm League Co-commissioners will revisit this approach and modify if needed throughout the season.

To expedite the game, the hitting team's coach should be on the mound, ready to pitch.

- Pitching distance will be 42' (it is recommended coaches' measure 42' prior to the start of the game to identify the location. The location is usually at the base of a regulation little league mound.) Please use discretion, no pitching closer than 38' (for safety purposes) if someone is having trouble reaching the plate.

- Pitchers are limited to 1 inning per game while keeping an eye on pitch count. Pitches should not exceed 50 pitches per game. Please keep the players health in mind when managing pitchers.
- Pitchers are allowed to pitch 2 innings per week maximum
- If a pitcher hits 2 batters in an inning, the pitcher **MUST** be removed from pitching in that game.
- If a pitcher has trouble throwing strikes and the coach has stepped in four batters in a row, the coach at his discretion will take over pitching the remainder of the inning.
- Pitchers require 1 full day rest between appearances.
- Pitching week runs Sunday - Saturday
- Pitchers removed cannot return to pitch in the same game.
- A Junior Umpire will call balls/strikes.
- **By coaches' mutual agreement, any of these rules may be modified on a game-to-game basis.**

Sportsmanship:

All coaches and players are to adhere to the WYBSA code of conduct. All coaches are to meet prior to the game at home plate to discuss the rules, and game logistics. Please use your discretion in making the game fun and to keep it moving along for all involved.

Sweatt Field Rules:

- There are NO Dogs allowed in Sweatt Field
- There is NO Smoking allowed at Sweatt field