

Danvers National Little League

Farm Division Rules & Guidelines

Division Overview

The Farm Division is a developmental program for players ages **6–7**, introducing coach-pitch baseball with tee support as needed. The focus is on **instruction, development, safety, and fun** in a **non-competitive** environment. Teams are ideally limited to **8 players** to maximize participation and repetitions.

Farm is an instructional division with **no standings, no playoffs, and no competitive emphasis**.

Core Principles

- Safety is the top priority
 - Keep the game fun and engaging
 - Focus on development over competition
 - Encourage teamwork and sportsmanship
 - Ensure equal participation for all players
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Session Format

- Each session includes **~20 minutes of practice** followed by **~60 minutes of gameplay**
 - Games typically run **3–4 innings**
 - **No official score** is kept
 - All players play defense every inning
 - Defensive positions rotate each inning
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Offensive Rules

- All players bat each inning unless **3 outs** are recorded
- Batters advance **one base at a time**
- Clean outfield hits may allow additional bases at coach discretion
- If the inning ends without 3 outs, the final batter becomes the **“home run hitter”** and runs all bases

Coach Pitch & Tee Usage

- Each batter receives **up to 5 coach-pitched balls**
- If no contact is made after 5 pitches **or 3 swinging strikes**, the tee is used
- Tee use is **strongly encouraged** as a developmental tool
- Coaches pitch from approximately **25–30 feet**, overhand only
- If a batted ball hits the coach pitcher: **dead ball, redo pitch**
- Coach pitchers must avoid obstructing defensive plays

Base Running Rules

- No base stealing
- Runners advance only on balls put in play
- Play stops when the ball is returned to the infield and controlled
- No advancing on overthrows (league may adjust if desired)
- Coaches guide runners to ensure safe advancement

Defensive Rules

- All players take the field defensively each inning
- No player may play the same position more than **2 innings per game**
- Every player should play **at least one infield inning** per game (unless safety concerns)
- The “pitcher’s helper” must wear a **helmet**
- Coaches may be on the field to instruct and ensure safety

Safety Requirements

- Helmets must be worn at bat and on the bases
- Only the active batter may hold a bat
- **No on-deck batters**
(Little League International rule)
- Catchers must wear **full protective gear**, including throat guard
- Helmets stay on until the player returns to the bench
- Only USA Baseball-approved bats are permitted
- Players must remain in designated team areas

Coaching Guidelines

- Coaches focus on teaching fundamentals, encouraging effort, and building confidence
- Coaches may be on the field to guide players and ensure safety
- Coaches act as umpires for safe/out calls
- Instruction takes priority over strict enforcement
- Maintain a positive, supportive environment at all times

Parent & Sideline Expectations

- Positive encouragement only — no negative comments toward players, coaches, or umpires
- Parents must remain behind designated spectator areas
- Only rostered coaches are allowed on the field or bench
- The goal is a fun, developmental experience for all players

Field Responsibilities

- Home team sets up bases and tee
- Both teams clean up after each game

Skill Development Focus

- Throwing mechanics (grip, aim, motion)
- Fielding fundamentals (stance, glove position)
- Hitting basics (stance, swing, contact)
- Catching and tracking skills
- Base running awareness
- Teamwork and communication