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**INSTRUCTIONAL SOFTBALL**

5 and 6 Year Olds

**OVERVIEW**

* Considered highly instructional.
* Every player will participate on defense and offense.
* Standings and win/losses are not recorded.  The emphasis at this age group is to encourage the understanding of the game and instill in each player the importance of good sportsmanship, honesty, and respect of the game.  At no time shall any player be discouraged for her lack of ability.

**PLAYING RULES**

* Games will consist of 4 innings.
* Each team will field their entire line-up on defense.  No player shall sit the bench.  All extra players shall be spread throughout the outfield.
* Each team will bat ½ of its roster each inning.  By the end of the game, every player will have a total of two at bats.   For the purpose of the batting order, the entire ½ of the roster will bat each inning regardless of the number of outs made.
* Records, Scores and Outs are not recorded.  If a player is called out, she shall go to the bench.
* All batters shall receive six pitches to swing at.  If the batter fails to hit one of the six pitches, the batter shall hit off of the tee until the ball is put into play.
* The ball must pass the 10ft arc line in front of home plate for tee hitters only and will be designated a foul ball. This does not apply when the batter is swinging.
* A maximum of one base can be taken on any ball hit in the infield.  If the ball is hit to the outfield, a maximum of two bases may be taken if the ball stays in front of the outfielders.  If the ball goes beyond the outfielders there is no maximum on the advancement of bases.
* No base stealing is allowed.
* The last batter of each inning will circle the bases until she scores.
* When times permits, a relay race may be run around the bases after the game is complete.  This is to give the kids some extra fun against the opposing team.  More importantly, this is a great opportunity to instill proper base running without them even knowing it.
* This age group shall have no minimum number of players needed to play a game.  Players that arrive late shall just be added at the end of the batting order.
* Players shall be rotated between the infield and outfield positions, as to keep playing time fair and consistent.  Every player shall play every defensive position during the season.  (rule of thumb:  every player should play 2 innings in the infield and two innings in the outfield each game)
* All batters MUST wear a helmet with a face guard.  **NO EXCEPTIONS**.
* The defensive position of pitcher MUST wear a heart guard.  **NO EXCEPTIONS.**

**TECHS**

* The bases are to be 50 feet.
* There is to be a 10 ft. arc in front of home plate.  This determines foul balls for tee hitters.
* Coaches should pitch to the kids from approximately 32 feet.
* One game ball will be provided for each game using the Optic 10" Safety Synthetic Softball.