**Girls and Boys T-Ball**

**2024**

***Current rules as for Softball Australia, except where stated otherwise below. Any modifications listed here are the rules of the game at Lansdowne Zone matches, any rules not listed automatically default to Softball Australia rules.***

# GENERAL RULES

1. A team shall consist of up to 12 junior players. All players must be turning 8,9 or 10 during the calendar year, it does not matter which grade they are in at school.
2. A maximum of 9 batters shall bat in an innings, provided that 3 outs have not occurred first. If a team is playing short, each player can only bat once in an innings. Therefore, if a team is playing short with only 8 players, the 8th player is the last batter, no other team member can bat in the 9th position. The same rule applies if playing short with 7 players – the 7th player takes the role of the last batter. If you have less than 7 players for the game, you must FORFEIT.
3. All 12 players are eligible to play and bat during each game, however, only 9 players are permitted onto the field at any one time. All players nominated on the team list as playing on a particular day MUST bat, following the batting order designated by the coach/captain. The coach can then determine which 9 take on fielding each innings. (When making a substitution, the coach must write the number 10, 11 or 12 players name next to/ on the same line as the player they are replacing on the score sheet)
4. The umpire will call “play” for each batter and after every strike, foul, dead ball, or time call.
5. The tee should be removed for players if practicable after a fair hit.
6. All interferences shall be called by the umpire and all players return to their positions once the ball has been called dead.
7. All obstructions shall be called by the umpire and the ball is immediately dead. All runners shall be awarded the next base that the obstruction stopped them from gaining.
8. Umpires should be aware that all other penalties are in accordance with the rules of Softball Australia. The nature of the game is to be an enjoyable learning experience for all players and umpires should therefore apply rules with discretion and consistent judgement.
9. There are to be no protests in tee ball.

# DURATION

1. A game shall last for 40 minutes or a maximum of 7 innings.
2. An innings is completed when either 3 outs have been achieved or 9 batters have completed their turn at the bat, whichever occurs first.
3. Coaches can shorten the duration of the game as long as it is negotiated before the game commences.
4. No run shall be scored :-
* After the 9th batter is out
* After the 9th batter has completed their turn at the bat and the ball has been returned to the pitcher in the pitcher’s circle.
* As otherwise prescribed in the rules of Softball. (e.g. the ball has been placed on the tee)

# PITCHING

1. The ball is not pitched in tee ball – instead it is batted from the tee stand.
2. The pitcher shall keep both feet in contact with the pitcher’s plate until the ball is hit. The pitcher’s plate shall be set at 9-10 normal steps from the tee.

# BATTING

1. The umpire shall ensure that the tee is adjusted to the batter’s satisfaction before calling “play”.
2. The batter is permitted one practice swing with no penalty if the ball falls from the tee.
3. Any additional movement of the bat towards the tee after the practice swing is to be called a strike.
4. If the batter hits the ball before play was called, the ball is dead.
5. The batter shall take a normal, forceful, forward swing when striking the ball.
6. Bunting is not allowed. Another swing must be taken if this occurs.
7. A strike is called when :-
	* The batter swings at the ball and misses
	* The batter swings at the ball and hits the tee, this is declared a “foul” strike
8. After 3 strikes, the batter is out.
9. A coach must inform the umpire when the 9th batter is next in the batting order. If playing short with 8 or 7 players, then the coach must inform the umpire as to who is taking the role of the last batter.

# BASE RUNNING

1. A runner must wait until the ball is hit before leaving the base. The umpire shall call “Dead ball” if a runner leaves before they should, and the runner is out.
2. When the batter hits a fair ball, play proceeds until all runners have held up on bases or no further play is possible. “Time” shall be called when all possible play has ceased, or the pitcher has hold of the ball and is holding it in the air, or the ball has been placed onto the tee.
3. When the ball is overthrown and has become dead, all runners are awarded one base each from the last base they touched before the overthrow.
4. Fielders are not permitted to block bases.
5. Bases shall be set at between 16-18 normal steps apart, as negotiated by the coaches before the start of the game.

# DEAD BALL

# a. The ball shall be declared dead if . . .

* + The batter hits the tee
	+ If there has been an obstruction or interference
	+ If the ball has been overthrown or hits a person not engaged in the game

# GETTING PLAYERS OUT

# a. The batter will be out if . . .

* + After the 3rd strike
	+ If the ball is caught on the full
	+ For throwing the bat dangerously
	+ If a fielder holding the ball touches first base before the batter arrives, or if the ball tags the batter before the batter reaches 1st base, the base runner is out :-
* If tagged by a fielder between bases
* If a fielder touches the base whilst holding the ball during a forced run
* If the runner has left the base before a caught fly ball, and the fielder, whilst holding the ball, reaches the base before the runner can return to that base the fielder must touch the runner with the hand or the mitt holding the ball for the runner to be out. If the fielder is not in control of the ball the runner is not out.

**A reminder that the Code of Conduct also applies to coaches and not just to players and spectators. Coaches should not be umpiring if they are not the agreed umpire and should always be setting a positive example to their team or teams. Code of Conduct breaches may result in games being stopped and warnings issued (to students, coaches or spectators) by the referee/umpire. If continued breaches occur, games should be stopped completely.**