



**LET'S
PLAY
T-BALL**

WELCOME!

MEET THE SOFTBALL VICTORIA PARTICIPATION TEAM



JO

DANNI

TIM

Jo Schutt - South East Metro & Regional Vic

Danielle Rigg - Eastern Metro & Sporting Schools

Tim Hatzi - North and West Metro

SCHOOL T-BALL

HOW TO PLAY

THIS PRESENTATION COVERS A FEW ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS OF T-BALL!

- Participation
- Differences
- What you need
- Batters & the Tee
- Fielding Positions
- Making an OUT in the field
- Scoring the Game
- FAQs & YOUR Questions
- Resources
- Contact the SV Participation Team



SCHOOL T-BALL

BENEFITS OF T-BALL

HIGH LEVELS OF PARTICIPATION, EXCELLENT ENGAGEMENT & LOADS OF FUN!

- T-Ball encourages high levels of participation, with all students hitting off the Tee, creating greater ability to put the ball in play and running the bases
- The game is played with 'traditional' rules of Softball / Baseball, allowing for those students who love a game with strategy and thinking, to really shine
- T-ball has participants practicing a wide range of skills including striking, throwing, catching, running and develops well-rounded athletes



SCHOOL T-BALL

IT'S ALL ABOUT INCLUSION AND FUN

RULES & DIFFERENT LEVELS OF PLAY!

- The information in this presentation is specific to SSV STATE competitions and we encourage all levels of play to use the same rules so the students can learn the rules as they progress through the levels
- We acknowledge that it can be challenging to understand and adhere to all applicable rules especially with beginners, however, the more these rules can be played at all levels, the easier it will be for the students and teachers as they move through the competition
- The emphasis should always be on fun and maximum participation



SCHOOL T-BALL

PARTICIPATION...

HOW MANY PLAYERS CAN PARTICIPATE?

- A maximum of 12 players on each team, teams can bat through their whole line up if you wish
- Only 9 fielders on the field at one time with additional players substituting in
- If a player is on the field, they bat in the same innings
- Once a player is substituted off, they are out for the rest of that game
- Students can be 'base coaches' (stand near 1st and 3rd base, approximately 3m away from the base) but no coaching is allowed by any person, during play



SCHOOL T-BALL

HOW IS T-BALL DIFFERENT TO FULLY-LOADED SOFTBALL?

THE MAIN DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE TWO GAMES:

Fully Loaded Slow Pitch Softball:

- Batters face a 'slow pitch' and only hit off the Tee if 3 'balls' are pitched
- 9 batters bat each innings
- Usually, 3 innings played in 50 minutes
- No tagging runners
- Runners don't have to "tag up" on a fly ball
- A maximum of 12 runs can be scored in an innings
- No sliding allowed
- 55ft base paths

Tee Ball:

- All batters hit from the TEE
- 3 outs or 7 runs (whichever comes first) means change over batting / fielding
- Runners can be 'tagged out' at any time they are off a base
- Runners must 'tag up' on a fly ball
- Sliding is allowed
- 60ft base paths

SCHOOL T-BALL

WHAT YOU NEED TO PLAY

KIT BAG

- **9-inch softcore (RIB) balls*** (white) You'll need to supply match balls for interschool games
- **Fielding Gloves** (usually 9 Right Hand Throw & 3 Left Hand Throw)
- **Catcher's face mask / helmet** (minimum requirement)
- **At least 1 Bat** (have several sizes to allow for different heights and strengths in students)
- **Minimum of 4 Batting Helmets** (helmets are mandatory)



*Teams are required to supply these for interschool sport days



SCHOOL T-BALL

WHAT YOU NEED TO PLAY

FIELD SET UP

- **Batting Tee*** at home plate
- **3 Square white bases & 1 Home plate**
- **Base paths are 60ft**
- **Pitching plate** (rubber strip) 35ft from home plate



*Teams are required to supply these for interschool sport days



SCHOOL T-BALL

FACILITATING THE GAME

YOU'LL ALSO NEED

- Scoresheets – 2 per game (can be double sided) as **each teacher scores for your own team and the opposition, then confer between innings**
- A clipboard & pen
- A copy of the rules for your reference
- Don't forget your First Aid kit



SCHOOL T-BALL

BATTING

T-BALL IS A GAME MADE FOR HITTING

- All batters hit off the tee
- If a batter swings and misses the ball (either making no contact or hitting the Tee) it's a strike
- To be hit 'fair' the ball must be hit further than 4.5m (an arc should be marked around home plate) and it must be hit inside the foul lines (from home to 1st base and home plate to 3rd base)
- If part of the tee is struck during the swing and the ball hasn't travelled far enough, the umpire may call it a foul
- If the batter has 2 strikes on them and they hit a foul, this is regarded as the 3rd strike and the batter is out
- The batter is out on the 3rd strike even if it's a foul ball

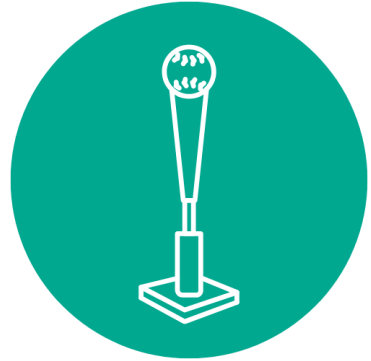


SCHOOL T-BALL

BATTING

T-BALL IS A GAME MADE FOR HITTING

- The batter must NOT throw the bat. If a batter throws the bat they should be given a warning, if this continues, they should be called OUT for throwing the bat
- Once the batter makes contact, the batter drops the bat and runs to first base
- The batter must only bring the bat towards the ball ONCE without actually hitting the ball. They cannot wave the bat back and forth towards the ball without hitting it, doing so will result in a strike being called
- The umpire will wait for the batter to be ready before they call “Play Ball”. Once the umpire calls “Play Ball” the batter cannot move their back foot before striking the ball. This prevents the batter from changing the direction of their hit after the fielders move.
- The only fielder allowed inside the diamond before the call of “Play Ball” is the pitcher.
- Once “Play Ball” has been called the fielders can move

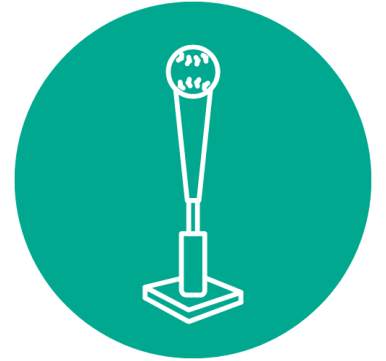


SCHOOL T-BALL

UMPIRING THE GAME

FOR TEACHERS

- Call “Play Ball” when the batter has set their feet and is ready to hit
- The batter cannot move their back foot once you’ve called “Play Ball” – this prevents them from changing the direction of their hit, or from taking a run up.
- “Play Ball” is called after each foul ball, strike or dead ball
- “Time” is called when the play stops. This is at the umpires’ discretion but should be consistent, usually when the ball is being thrown back to the pitcher / catcher. This is to stop the base runners continuing to advance while the fielding team is getting the ball back to the tee.
- Remember to note if a runner is forced or not forced to help you make the correct call of ‘out’ or ‘safe’. See the next slide.



SCHOOL T-BALL

BASE RUNNING

A BIG PART OF THE STRATEGY

- Runners can only leave the base after the ball is hit (no leads are allowed).
- If a runner leaves the base before the ball is hit, they will be called out (umpires should give them a warning first)
- Teach kids to run THROUGH FIRST BASE at FULL pace and then return to the base immediately.
- First base and home plate are the only two that a runner can safely run through.
- Teach kids to STOP on 2nd or 3rd base. If they run past the base, they risk being tagged out by a fielder with the ball.
- Runners should know if they MUST RUN (forced), or NOT, based on where the other base runners are situated e.g.
 - If they are on 1st base, they are always 'forced' to run when the ball is hit
 - If they are on 2nd or 3rd base and all bases behind them are occupied by other runners, they are also forced to run
 - If they are on 2nd or 3rd base and not all bases behind them are occupied (e.g. they on 2nd but 1st is not occupied) then they are NOT forced, they can decide to run if they deem it safe to do so

SCHOOL T-BALL

BASE RUNNING

TAGGING UP!

- If a ball is hit 'foul', runners will be asked to return to the base they came from
- However, if a foul ball is caught, the runner can 'tag up' and advance if they think it's safe to do so



WHAT'S 'TAGGING UP'?

- If a ball is hit in the air the runner must 'tag up' if the ball is caught, meaning they need to stay ON that base until the ball is caught. Once the ball is caught the runner can decide to advance if they wish to
- If the runner has left the base before the ball is caught, they need to return to that base as quickly as possible
- If the runner left before the ball was caught and the fielding team gets the ball to that base before the runner returns, the runner is out (because they did not 'tag up')
- Should the batter get caught out and the runner is out from not 'tagging up' the fielding team has made a 'double play'.
- Remember, runners can choose to advance to the next base after they have tagged up

SCHOOL T-BALL

THE CATCHER

THE CATCHER MUST REMEMBER TO BE READY FOR A PLAY HOME PLATE

- The catcher (or backstop) stands back far enough from home plate in a safe position while the batter is hitting (to the front side of the batter, never behind them)
- When the ball is hit, the umpire should remove the Tee and the catcher can come to home plate, ready to make a play at home if applicable. We've seen at some competitions where the Tee is placed in front of home plate and the catcher can use the Tee, leaving the home plate free for the base runner.
- Catchers should wear a protective mask. Other protective gear is recommended but not compulsory
- The catcher can remove the mask after the batter has put the ball in play and dropped the bat

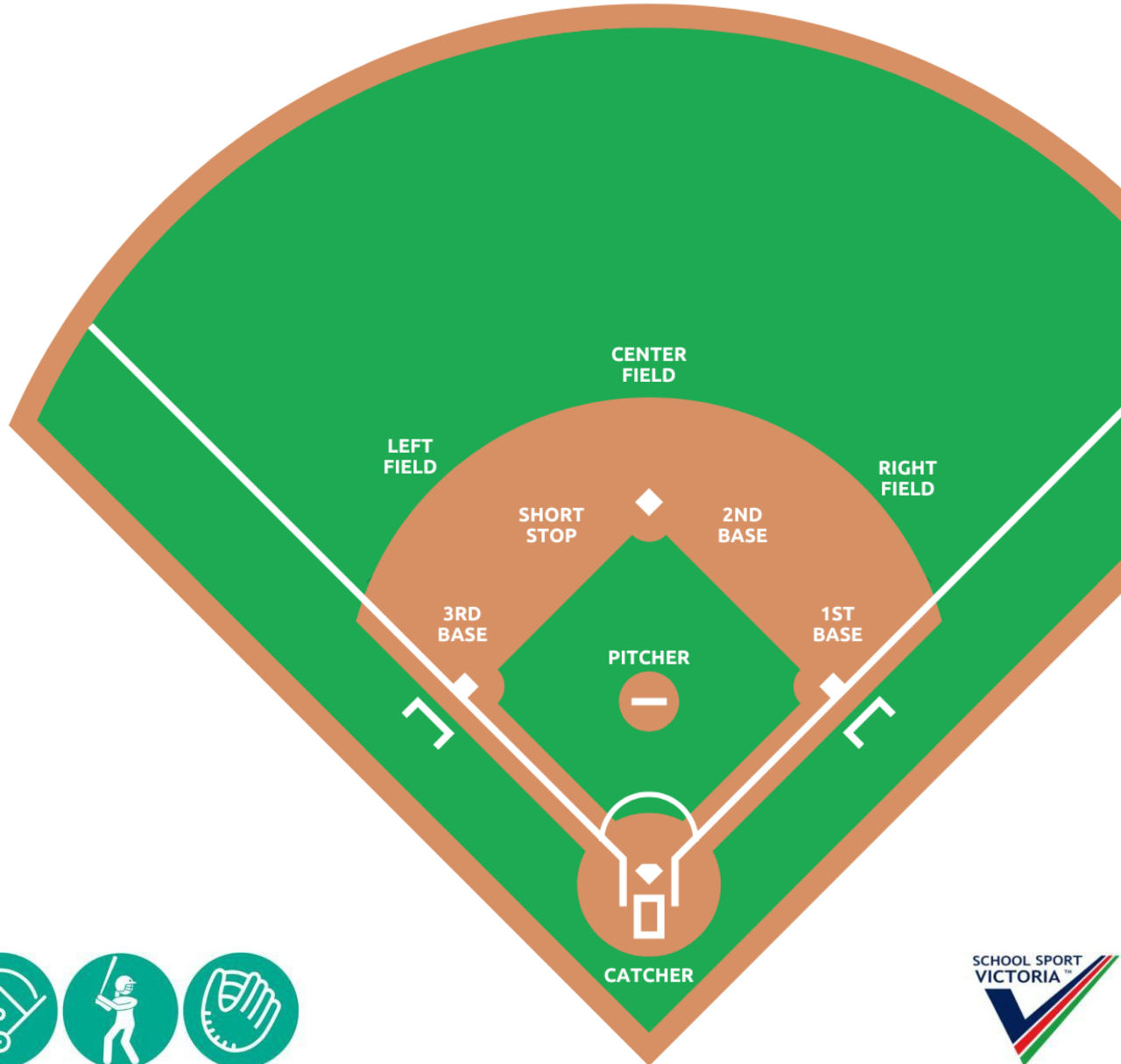


SCHOOL T-BALL

FIELDING POSITIONS

EXAMPLE OF FIELD SET UP:

- There can only be one fielder in the infield when the umpire calls batter up
- Before play starts, fielders are NOT standing ON the base but near the base waiting to field the ball
- Fielders are spread evenly and only need to go to the base if a play is being made there
- Fielders should be clear of the base paths to allow space for the runners and avoid collisions
- Fielders must be inside the field as shown on the diagram

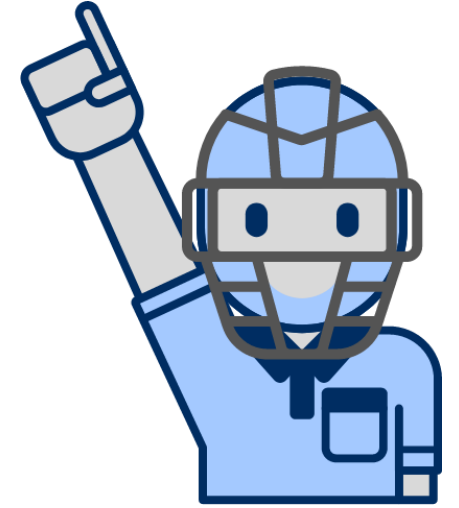


SCHOOL T-BALL

HOW TO PLAY

GETTING THE BATTER 'OUT':

- **STRIKE 3!** - If the batter swings and misses on the 3rd strike, they are OUT
- **If a ball is hit and caught** on the full by a fielder, the batter is OUT
- For those familiar with the 'infield fly' rule – this does not apply
- Once the batter hits the ball, they become a base runner...



TO GET A BASE RUNNER OUT, FIELDERS CAN:

1. If the runner is FORCED, touch the closest base before the runner gets there (with possession of the ball).
2. Any fielder can touch the bases to make an out, not just the fielder playing that base / position
3. Field the ball and throw it to another fielder on a base that a runner is attempting to run to
4. Let's talk about getting forced or not forced runners out...

SCHOOL T-BALL

TO GET A BASE RUNNER OUT...

FIELDERS MUST THINK ABOUT WHETHER THE RUNNER IS FORCED TO RUN, OR NOT:

1. **FORCED RUNNER:** Field the ball and touch the base (with their FOOT) before the runner OR tag the runner with the ball (in glove or hand)
2. **NOT FORCED RUNNER** i.e., a base behind the runner was not occupied and therefore they've chosen to run: If a runner is NOT forced to run, they **MUST BE TAGGED**.
3. Touching the base will NOT result in an out if the runner is not forced

REMEMBER:

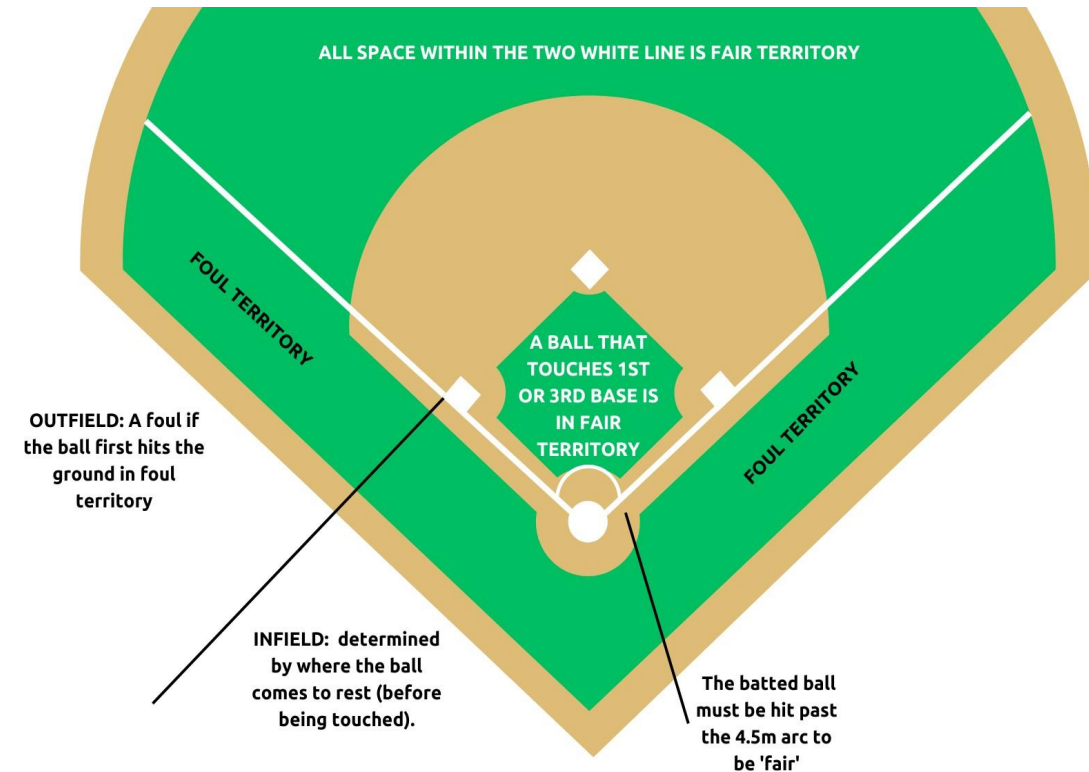
- A runner can be tagged (with ball or with ball in glove) at any time they are not on a base (either between bases or if they've stepped off / overrun the base)
- The runner at 1st base is always 'forced' to run
- Runners who over-run the base risk being tagged out

SCHOOL T-BALL

FOUL BALLS EXPLAINED

WHAT IS A FOUL BALL? INFIELD

- Firstly, please note that this mostly applies to Softball where there can be more spin on the batted ball. The main things to note for T-Ball is that any ball landing outside the lines is a foul.
- In the case of a ball landing in infield foul territory - any ball that comes to a stop / finishes in foul territory that has not been touched by a fielder before it lands, is deemed a foul ball
- So, if a ball first lands in fair territory and rolls or bounces out into foul territory without being touched, this is a foul
- If a fielder touches the ball in fair territory and knocks or carries it into foul territory, it's a FAIR ball and play continues

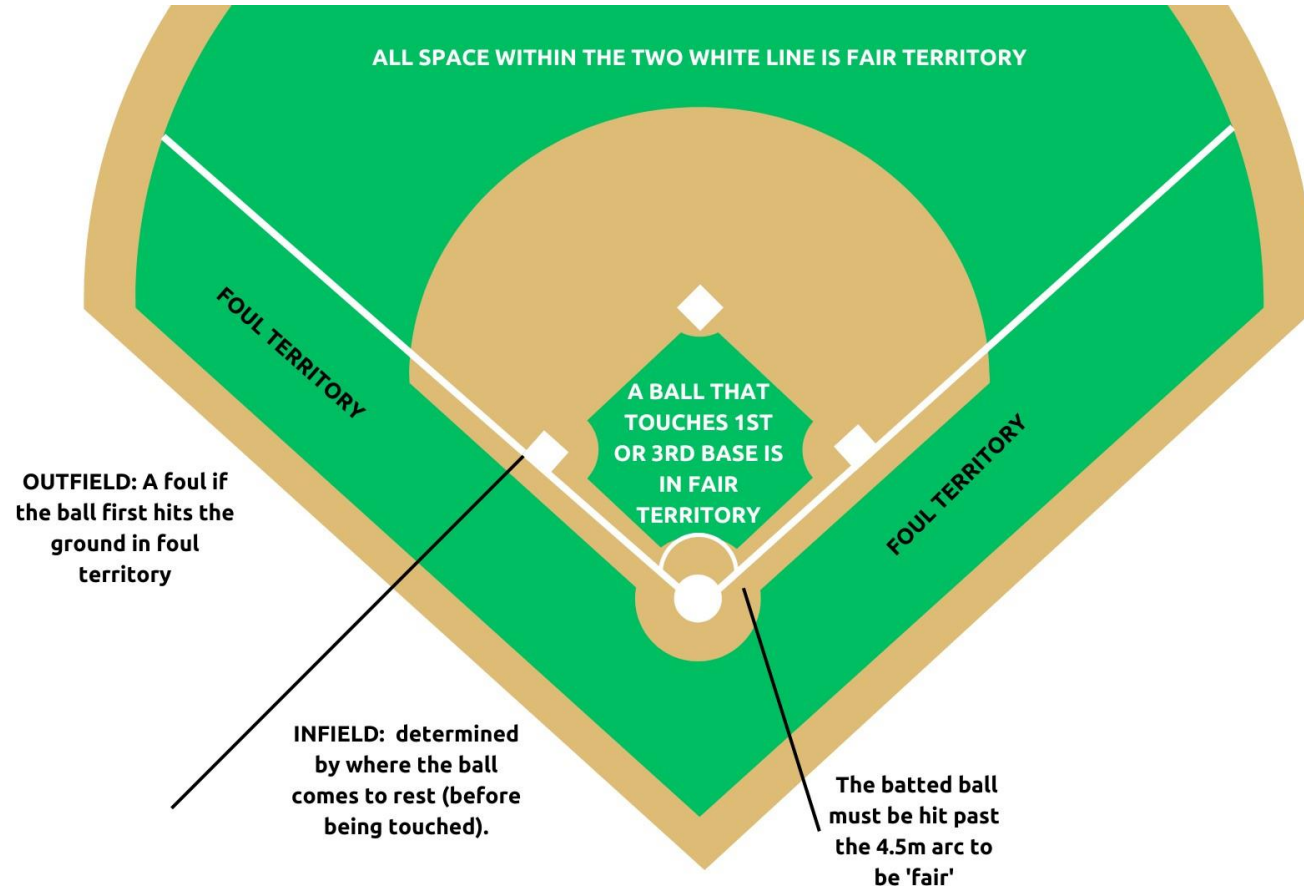


SCHOOL T-BALL

FOUL BALLS EXPLAINED

WHAT IS A FOUL BALL? INFIELD CONTINUED

- On the flipside, a ball may first land foul and roll or bounce INTO play – this is a fair ball and is played out as normal
- Or it may just land in foul territory and stay there – that's a FOUL
- If a ball comes to rest within the 4.5m arc its FOUL

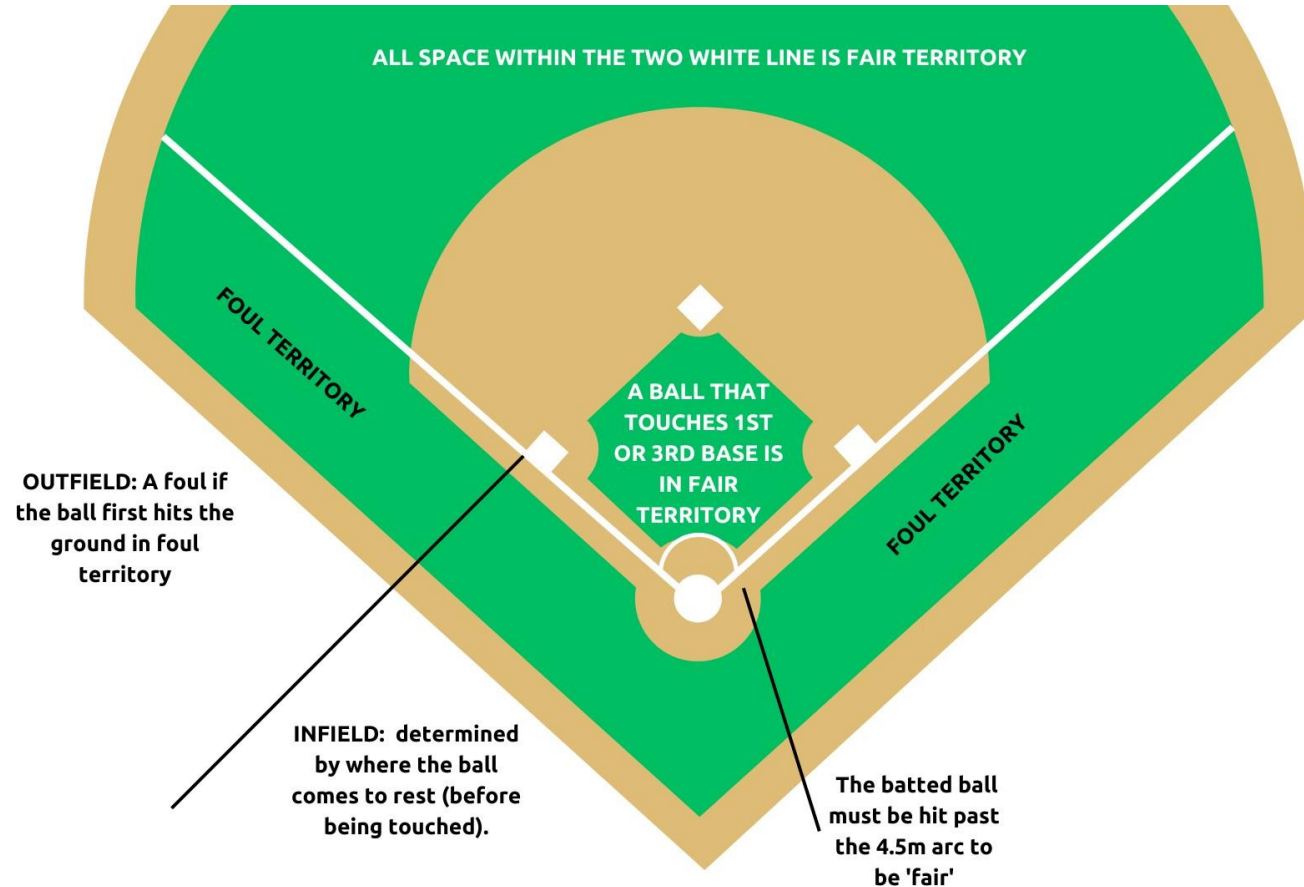


SCHOOL T-BALL

FOUL BALLS EXPLAINED

WHAT IS A FOUL BALL? OUTFIELD

- For an OUTFIELD HIT (happening after 1st base or 3rd base) we look at where the ball first touches the ground
- So, any ball that first lands in foul territory regardless of where it finishes, is deemed a FOUL ball
- If it first bounces in fair territory and then goes out – this is a FAIR ball because it first landed in fair territory



SCHOOL T-BALL

FOUL BALLS

GAME PLAY TIP!

- We teach batters to run regardless of whether they think it's fair or foul because it may change
- So, don't watch the ball, just run to first base! If the umpire calls FOUL, then all runners return to where they were
- **A FOUL ball can be caught, and the batter is out – runners can advance if they choose (if they have 'tagged up').**



SCHOOL T-BALL

SKILL FUNDAMENTALS

THROWING THE BALL

Every action in T-Ball and Softball requires the player to be 'athletic' and use their whole body. So, when throwing a ball, we use the lower body as much as the upper body

- Bring the ball right back behind the head, keeping the elbow bent
- Standing side-on, drive from the back leg and take a large step (stride) with the opposite leg to the throwing arm
- Emphasis the sequence of shoulder, elbow, wrist to throw the ball. This helps to prevent kids throwing with a pushing action.
- Finish off the throw by crossing the arm to the opposite hip and bringing the back leg through
- TIP: we can encourage kids to point to the target with the glove



SCHOOL T-BALL

SKILL FUNDAMENTALS

CATCHING THE BALL

The red and blue glove shows where the ball should be landing in the glove, AND how the glove should be positioned when catching a ball

- Teach fielders to have an athletic stance
- Fingers to the sky, palm to the ball
- Bend knees to catch a low ball and maintain proper glove position
- Only flip glove to face downwards if the ball is below the knees
- Free hand is near the glove ready to close the ball in
- Free hand is also ready to transfer the ball from glove to throwing hand



SCHOOL T-BALL

SKILL FUNDAMENTALS

CATCHING A FLY BALL

As with catching a regular ball, the glove should still be “palm out” & “fingers to the sky”

- The main difference here is that a fly ball should be caught ABOVE THE HEAD
- Keep elbows soft and let the ball come into the glove (rather than reach up or jump for it)
- Use the feet to move to where the ball is going to land - position your body UNDER the ball

And these same rules apply

- Teach fielders to have an athletic stance, fingers to the sky, palm to the ball. Free hand is near the glove ready to close the ball in & transfer the ball from glove to throwing hand



SCHOOL T-BALL

SKILL FUNDAMENTALS

BASICS OF FIELDING A GROUND BALL

The first thing is getting the fielders into a 'ready position' before the ball is hit – be in an athletic stance with feet wide, glove low, ready to move in any direction

When fielding a ball on the ground:

- Move the feet to the ball with feet are wide with your knees bent
- Bottom pointing to the ground and chest forward (to prevent the head getting too low)
- Glove out in front low to the ground, weight is slightly forward on balls of feet
- Watching the ball all the way into the glove, spare hand is ready to trap the ball and make the throw

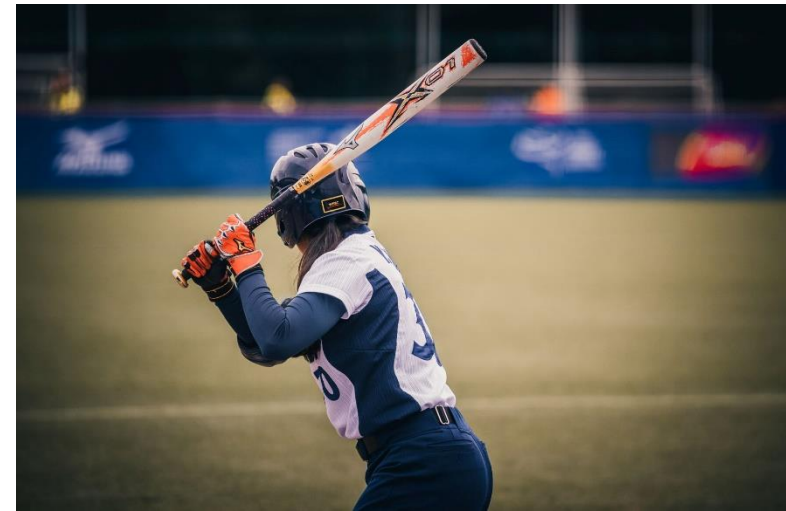


SCHOOL T-BALL

SKILL FUNDAMENTALS

HITTING / BATTING

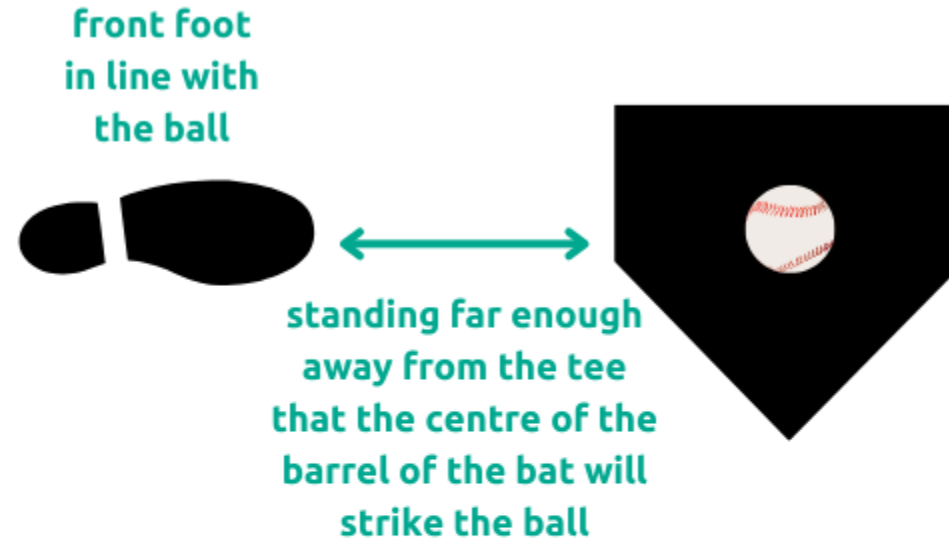
- Wide feet to provide an athletic stance
 - Hands start high at the back shoulder
 - Drive forward with the hips, keeping the back foot planted throughout the swing, getting power from the ground up
 - **Watch the ball**, pick a spot on the ball as a target to contact
 - Hands to the ball, barrel of the bat follows
-
- **SWING HARD, PUT THE BAT DOWN & RUN FAST**



SCHOOL T-BALL

SKILL FUNDAMENTALS

BATTING STANCE



- This stance allows the batter to hit the ball in FRONT of their body, rather than in the middle, which will provide more power.



SCHOOL T-BALL

SCORING THE GAME

- Set your batting order – **this must stay the same for the entire game.** You cannot change your batting order for each innings, or in the middle of an innings.
- If batter number 5 was the last person to bat before the 3rd out or 7th run, then batter number 6 will start the next innings
- Follow the runner around the diamond by drawing a line when they reach a base
- Colour in the square when a base runner comes 'home' to indicate a run scored
- Place the number in the square if the batter / runner got out, in order of the out. This helps you to identify how many outs there are in that innings. 1, 2, 3
- OR you can do a completely simplified version and mark a tick when a player crosses home plate and a cross when they go out
- See the next page for an advanced scoring option.



A CLOSER LOOK AT SCORING THE GAME

Innings 1

- Sammy came home & scored a run
- Mohamed made it to 2nd base but was put out at 3rd when advancing on Abdul's hit (1st out for that innings)
- Abdul came home
- Sarah was put out at 1st base (2nd out)
- Nellie & Noah came home
- Eli made it to 2nd base on his own it
- Ameen went out at 1st base (3rd out = side away). Eli doesn't score
- Place a diagonal line across Alice's box in that innings, she is the 1st batter for the next innings (start scoring in the next column across)

Innings 2

- Alice was put out at 1st base (1st out)
- Luca & Kolani made it home
- Rohan made it around to 3rd base
- Back to the top of the sheet – Sammy hit the ball in play and made it to 1st, but Rohan was put out trying to come home (2nd out)
- Mohamed was put out at 1st base (3rd out, side away)
- Place a diagonal line through Abdul's box, he starts the next innings

3rd Innings

- Abdul & Sarah got home
- Nellie was put out at 1st base (1st out)
- Noah made it to 1st base, but on Eli's hit he was put out at 2nd base (2nd out for that innings)
- Eli, Ameen & Alice came home
- Luca got out at 1st base (3rd out = side away). Kolani starts the next innings, and so on...

SCHOOL SPORT VICTORIA

TEE BALL SCORE SHEET

PRIMARY

Boys/Mixed Girls

Round: Diamond #

TEAMS **Red** Vs **Blue**

TEAM

POS	INN	PLAYERS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
		Sammy	1						
		Mohammed	2	1	3				
		Abdul	3						
		Sarah	4	2					
		Nellie	5		1				
		Noah	6		2				
		Eli	7						
		Ameen	8	3					
		Alice	9		1				
		Luca	10			3			
		Kolani	11						
		Rohan	12		2				
TOTALS			INNINGS TOTAL		PROGRESS TOTAL				
			4	4	3	7	5	12	

SCHOOL T-BALL

GAME DURATION / ENDING THE GAME

EACH TEAM MUST HAVE AN EVEN AMOUNT OF BATTING AND FIELDING

Games are usually 50-60 minutes OR 7 innings. If the teams have not had an even amount of hitting and fielding opportunities, then the score 'reverts back' to the last equal innings. Example

- Innings 1: school 'A' bats (makes 6 runs), school 'B' fields
- Innings 1: school 'B' bats (makes 8 runs), school 'A' fields
- Innings 2: school 'A' bats (makes 4 runs), school 'B' fields
- Innings 2: school 'B' bats (makes 7 runs), school 'A' fields

The score is now School 'A' = 10 to School 'B' = 15

- Top of innings 3: school 'A' bats and makes 6 runs, school 'B' fields
- Time runs out and school B does not get to have their 3rd bat, so the last 6 runs that school 'A' made do not count towards their score – the score 'reverts back' to the last complete innings.

SCHOOL T-BALL

WHAT IF IT'S A TIE?

WHAT DO YOU DO IF THE SCORE IS TIED AT THE END?

- This will only be relevant for State competitions or where the result determines the team that goes to the next round
- An extra innings is played until a winner is determined
- For District, Division and Regional competitions, see SSV Tee Ball Primary Rules

RESOURCES

WHERE TO FIND MORE INFORMATION:

COACHING RESOURCES:

For Tee Ball related games and drills: <https://www.softballbatterup.com.au/>

or Home Run Heroes: <https://www.softball.org.au/programs/home-run-heroes-about/>

Schools are eligible to apply for **Sporting Schools** funding, and request a coach to run a 4–6-week Softball program:

<https://www.sportaus.gov.au/schools/schools/funding>

<https://www.sportaus.gov.au/schools/schools/sports/softball>

WE ARE HERE TO HELP!

WE'D LOVE TO:

- Run a Softball / T-ball session with your students and teachers
- Attend your interschool competitions
- Run a face-to-face Professional Development session with your group of District / Regional coordinators or PE staff
- Assist with accessing the right resources



WE ARE HERE TO HELP!

OUR AREAS

Danielle Rigg danielle.rigg@softball.org.au

SSV: Eastern Metro Region & Sporting Schools

Softball Associations: Dandenong, Waverley, Knox

Tim Hatzi tim.hatzi@softball.org.au

SSV: North and West Metro Regions

Softball Associations: Geelong, Werribee, Northern District, Sunshine, Sunbury, Keilor Park, Hume

Jo Schutt jo.schutt@softball.org.au

SSV: South East Metro Region and Regional Vic

Softball Associations: Melbourne, Frankston, Casey, Glen Eira, Albury Wodonga, East Gippsland, Bass Coast



THANKS FOR SUPPORTING T-BALL!



Danielle Rigg: danielle.rigg@softball.org.au

Tim Hatzi: tim.hatzi@softball.org.au

Jo Schutt: jo.schutt@softball.org.au