



7U Overview

This is brief overview of the Thornhill Baseball philosophy, and some tips on how to structure your approach when coaching in our 7U division.

7U Philosophy

- 7U is an introduction to baseball, where we attempt to develop some **very** basic skills. Really, what we want is for the kids to have lots of fun, and enjoy baseball now and going forward. We play with NO SCORING and NO OUTS, and under the Fair Play Rule (meaning all kids play the same amount). Playing this way will save you a lot of stress, and will help to keep the games fun (and hopefully tear / argument free).
- We also need to stress safety, so please make sure helmets with cages are worn AT ALL TIMES.
- I encourage you to actively seek parent support and participation during practice and games, where it is helpful for you. As I'll outline later, ideally, when your team is hitting, what you want is to be stationed at home plate, loading balls onto the tee, while there is a parent at first and one at third, directing your runners, and one parent on the bench, making sure the kids are sitting in order, ready to hit. When fielding, you should have parents (with gloves) in the OF, and in the IF at SS and 2B, teaching and directing traffic. So, yeah, you will need help. Don't be shy to ask - when sending your initial note to parents, I would plant the seed...

Field organization

- 2 Rovers (line up on imaginary line between 1st and 3rd). Rovers cannot move in until ball is hit.
- Full infield, remainder of kids in outfield.
- Once the ball is back to coach at home plate the play is dead.
- ***Optional: If coaches want to help coach the kids in the field, no problem. Keep it simple e.g. infielders throw to first, outfielders throw to infield.***

- Tip: Put X's where kids should stand to teach positional play (draw X in sand at 1B, 2B, SS, 3B, etc.) - this can really help!
- Tip: Rotate outfield and infield and rovers to ensure fair play - feel free to do so even during innings. Not a lot happens in the OF at 7U, so you want to make sure kids are not falling asleep out there. Keep them moving!

Batting

- Complete your full batting order each inning.
- Hitting team assistant coaches should organize hitters. Also put coach at 1st and 3rd if possible.
- No on deck batter for safety.
- Have a parent running the bench / getting the kids organized to keep the game moving.
- No stealing or lead offs.
- Tip: run line-up Top to Bottom, Bottom to Top in terms of batting order to ensure fair play. Also, this will save you from the 'why am I hitting last again' conversation. Print attached PDF for batting order template.

Practice

- The two teams that will be playing against each other in the game will be using the field at the same time to practice, so one team should run their drills in the OF to start, and one in the IF, and then you can rotate. Everything you will be doing can really happen anywhere.
- Recommendation: Upon arrival do sprints in the outfield and some team stretching. Mainly, during practice, you will be working on ground balls and hitting in the drills, maybe fly balls later in the season.
- Ideas
 - Ground balls - Line the kids up in a single file line, and throw them ground balls. Teach them to start in the ready position, move left / right if needed & watch the ball into their glove. They should then throw the ball back to you, and go to the end of the line. If you have enough parents, you can break the line into two groups. When throwing back to you, have the kids aim for your chin (hoping the throws will end at your chest).
 - Fly Balls (later in the season) – Ready position, move forward/back, catch ball at chest.
 - Hitting – Ready position, Swing high to low. If you have enough help, have half the team fielding, half hitting, then switch.

Parents

- Parents are ultimately responsible for their children — not the coach; thus parents should not leave the field. We are not a city program with paid, trained staff. We are volunteers.
- Profanity, rudeness, aggressive behaviour etc. are not acceptable.
- Report any issues to VP, House League

Personal Equipment

- Helmets with face masks / cages are highly recommended for batting and fielding.
- Plastic cleats are allowed (optional). Metal cleats are not allowed. Sneakers are fine.
- If children bring their own bat, it can (and likely will) be used by the entire team.
- Full uniforms, including Thornhill Baseball hat, should be worn.
- Each child should bring their own labeled water bottle.

Team Equipment

- Take care of equipment
- Return it at the end of the season
- Home team set up bases – 50-foot bases (max)
- Home team provides game balls
- It is the responsibility of both teams to clean up their bench, stands, garbage, all equipment, etc. after each game. Keep our parks clean

Key Points to Remember

- There are no walks or strikeouts.
- The ball must travel 10-feet or it is a foul.
- No fielder may cross the playing line until the ball is hit.
- No stealing. Player stays on the base until the ball is hit.
- An inning is over when all the players have batted once.
- Scores are not kept.
- Safety helmets must be worn.