

About Us/Purpose/Mission

Home Run Baseball is a Christian homeschool baseball and softball league. We provide home-educated students with an environment to develop skills, good sportsmanship, and a positive recreational experience. We aim to carry this out in a safe and respectful atmosphere with instruction and competition based on Biblical principles.

Our purpose is to glorify Jesus Christ and encourage Christian character in each individual involved, whether they are players, coaches, umpires, parent-volunteers, or spectators.

Preseason / Registration / League Participation

All registration costs and fees must be paid in full prior to the first practice to be included on the team. Spaces will not be held without payment.

Children 5 to 18 years of age as of April 1 of the current year are eligible to participate. The t-ball and super t-ball (Coach Pitch) teams are co-ed. There are separate boys and girls teams for the 9-12 and 13-18 year old teams. Age brackets may be rearranged as needed depending on the ages and number of participants.

This is a homeschool league; however, students from small private, charter or online schools are welcome to join our league, since these schools typically don't have the resources to organize athletic teams.

All players, parents, coaches, assistant coaches and volunteers must agree to abide by the rules and regulations of this league.

Parent Responsibilities

This is not a drop-off program. Parents are expected to volunteer in some capacity (field prep, team parent, score keeping, etc.) See *Roles and Duties* for more information.

Parents please supervise your children at all times. If you are unable to stay at a practice or game, or if you are carpooling, please arrange to have another adult responsible for your children. Also let the coach know if you are leaving another adult in charge in the event there is an emergency.

Please contact your coach or team parent if you will be absent for practice or a game.

Facility Reminders

Please keep outhouses/restrooms clean and do not allow your children to play in, on, or around these facilities.

At Butte Creek, all Home Run participants need to stay within the practice fields or playground areas. There should be no loitering around other parts of the school, inside or outside.

Always keep the fields clean; respect practice and game facilities and properties. Pick up trash even if it is not yours. Make sure you collect all of your family's things. Home Run is not responsible for lost or stolen items.

Use caution in and around all parking lots, and remind your children to do the same. When driving in the parking lot, please exercise caution!

Inclement Weather

In the event that practices or games are cancelled due to inclement weather, the league manager will send an e-mail by 3:30 pm. Team parents or coaches may elect to follow-up with phone calls confirming the cancellation. If you do not get an email or phone call, assume practices or games are on.

Team Uniforms, Dress Code, and Player Gear

Uniforms provided by the league consist of shirts and hats/visors. Players and coaches are required to wear their uniforms to every game. Players not wearing their uniforms may not be allowed to play in the game. The plate umpire will make the final decision. Uniform shirts shall not be altered. Sleeves shall not be cut or modified in any way.

Other dress code requirements:

- In general, all clothing shall be modest, not tight-fitting or revealing; t-shirts are ok, tank tops are not.
- Players are encouraged to wear baseball pants, however they may wear shorts- as long as, with arms resting at the side, short length reaches past the finger tips.
- Jeans are allowed but not recommended as they inhibit mobility.
- All pants will fit at the waist and not sag or show undergarments.
- Please ensure your children have proper attire for practices and games. Early season means cold and potentially wet practices/games (if not cancelled); late season means hot and sunny. Coats and sweatshirts must be worn UNDER jersey.

- Appropriate footwear is mandatory- players shall wear either cleats or closed toed shoes suitable for running. Metal cleats are strictly prohibited. Players with inappropriate footwear will not be allowed to participate in practices or games.
- Jewelry is forbidden with the exception of medical identification or religious items. If these are worn, they are to be taped down in place. No large barrettes are allowed. Tattoos shall be entirely covered. Sunglasses are recommended.
- Prior to each game, coaches will line up players and verify that they are wearing appropriate attire.

Special Requirements for 9-12 and high school boys and girls teams:

- Boys MUST wear an athletic cup for protection. This is not optional.
- Girls MUST wear proper undergarments. (Sports bras are encouraged for comfort and modesty).

Roles and Duties

Coaches

Please remember that if you are a coach, you need to be dedicated to these young people. They are looking to you for guidance and they deserve your respect and attention. Please make these players a priority. Be a good Christian example for our children and always encourage good sportsmanship.

Coaches shall:

- Follow and enforce all rules and regulations of the league.
- Encourage Christian character in each individual, whether they are players, fellow coaches, umpires, parent volunteers, or spectators.
- As a child of God, every player should be treated with respect and honor as you would your own child, regardless of the player's ability. Players should be encouraged to develop both their weaknesses and strengths. Coaches should take into consideration positions that players do and don't want to play. Players should also be encouraged to try new positions. Every position a player desires should be encouraged, even if they really need to develop skill in that area.
- Pray with your players at the beginning of each practice and game. We are here to glorify Jesus Christ, our Savior, and have fun in the process. Every decision should be prayerfully considered in order to maintain the integrity and witness of the league.
- Practices should begin with basic stretching and jogging/warm-up. We are continually praying for an injury-free season.

Coaches are free to choose their own drills to teach the game effectively. Please come to the practices/games with a plan in place for what drills you are going to work on and what positions your players will be. This will require some homework on your part. You only have these players for a limited time and therefore you should plan to use the time wisely.

Please use common courtesy. We have to share the fields for practices and games. Please be prompt when your time is up and vacate the field as a team. Also, if your team is taking the field, encourage them to be patient while the previous team wraps up. For safety reasons, older teams/players need to be aware of younger teams/players who may be in the area, prior to starting to throw balls, bat, etc.

Every player shall receive equal playing time. Every player will be included in the batting order whether they are playing in the field or not. No player will play in the same position more than TWO innings per game. These do not have to be consecutive.

We are teaching player's skills and sportsmanship, not winning at any cost.

Please note these modifications for the high school Baseball and Softball teams:

- No player shall pitch, catch, or occupy any outfield position for more than two innings.
- No player shall play any of the remaining positions for more than 3 innings per game.
- The score should have absolutely no bearing on player rotation. If you have a player who wants to pitch, but can't throw a straight ball, that player deserves to play in that position at least one inning during the season.

Competition is encouraged as long as it is done biblically, and in a loving and supportive manner. Whether games are close or lopsided, cheering for and encouraging players from both sides is expected.

Coaches, players, and parents shall exhibit self-control, not disputing or voicing disagreement with the ruling of an umpire. If a player does argue a call, the coach shall remove the player from the game immediately. However, players and coaches are always welcome to ask a respectful question for the purpose of instruction.

Coaches have the responsibility to lead by example- whether in instruction of the sport itself, or in Christ-like attitudes and behavior on the field. If we expect the young people on our teams to "walk worthy" of Christ as they learn and play this sport, then we, the adults, must lead by example. As Christians, always remember our primary goal is reflecting Christ to others, NOT winning a ball game.

Our children are our greatest accomplishments. They deserve to have a coaching staff that has the highest integrity and their best interest at heart.

Team Parents

All teams will have one team parent for the entire season. The team parent is the link between the league managers, coach, and the team. The team parent will schedule all necessary jobs (bench parent and base coaches for T-ball and super t-ball teams; scorekeeper and base coaches for 9-12 and 13-18 teams) and share this information with the coach.

The team parent will notify parents when practice or games are cancelled. They should also send reminders to the parents assigned game duties for the upcoming week's game(s).

The team parent will let the league manager know on the first night of practice what team color and team name were selected. When the shirts come in, the team parent will hand them out according to the sizes indicated on the registration form.

The team parent will help coordinate the timing and location of team pictures, take and print the team pictures, and put together a scrapbook page for each player. Alternatively, the team parent may ask for another volunteer from the team to assist with pictures and scrapbooking, but must be prepared to fulfill these duties. Supplies are provided by the league.

The team parent constitutes a volunteer role fulfillment on one player's team. If you have multiple children participating, you will have duties to fulfill on their teams as well. If a family has difficulty in meeting this obligation, please discuss with the league managers within the first two weeks of the season.

Parents – Game Duties

All families will be asked to provide an adult or responsible teen to volunteer for each of their children's games during the season.

Volunteer opportunities include:

- T-Ball: bench parent and base coach
- Super T-Ball: bench parent and base coach
- 9-12: scorekeeper, umpire, and base coach
- High School: scorekeeper, umpire, and base coach

Please note that:

- Game duties will be scheduled by the team parent with the exception of umpires that are coordinated by the league.
- Please let the team parent know your experience and availability.
- Remember- Everyone can do something, even if your baseball experience is limited.

- You will need to find your own replacement in the event that you cannot fulfill your duties. Please let the team parent know in advance so they are aware of any changes, and may possibly be able to assist you in finding a replacement.

Game duties assigned by team parent:

Bench Parents (T-Ball & Super T-Ball)

This role is required for t-ball and super t-ball games only. This parent helps keep the players focused on the game, cheering on their teammates, and reminding players of the batting order, and being available to help coaches as needed.

Base Coach

Base coaches stand near first and third base and help runners know when to stay and when to run. For T-Ball and Super T-Ball this is a very simple “stop” and “go.” For the older teams, coaches may prefer to base coach themselves or have the team parent assign parent volunteers to base coach.

Scorekeeper (9-12 & HS)

Score is not kept in T-ball or Super t-ball games (batting is completed each inning when both teams go through their batting order).

For 9-12 and 13+ games there will be two scorekeepers for each game (one from each team.) Having two scorekeepers per game helps maintain consistency and balance if there is an error or dispute.

Scorekeepers keep track of balls/strikes, runners on base, number of outs, and runs scored for both teams. If you do not know how to keep score, the team parent or another experienced volunteer is available to teach you. Scorebooks are provided to each coach with the gear at the beginning of the season.

Umpires – Updated for 2024!

This role is for 9-12 and 13+ (High School) games. All families will be required to provide an adult (or responsible teen) to umpire ONE game per child during the season. (The only exception is for Coaches; if your family is providing a coach, you are not required to umpire for any of your kids’ games.) During registration, families may choose to pay an opt-out fee of \$25/child (9-12 & 13+). There is a \$75 family cap.

There are two umpires per game; the more experienced umpire will be behind home plate, and the less experienced umpire will be in the field. The plate umpire is in charge of the game and his decisions are final. Games will not commence until there are 2 umpires on the field.

All umpires shall be familiar with the rules of the league. Umpires do not need to have any prior experience. The umpire coordinator will provide training at the Family Meeting (all parents are required to attend, as well as any non-parent umpires). The umpire coordinator may elect to provide other resources and training, as schedule and resources allow.

Families will have an opportunity to sign up for their choice of games to umpire. The sign up window will begin at the Family Meeting and will end at the start of the first practice. After the sign up window closes, the umpire coordinator will send out the umpire schedule – assigning families who did not sign up (or opt-out) one game per child to provide an umpire. You will need to find your own replacement in the event that your schedule changes.

Plate umpires are valuable and necessary volunteers for smooth and successful games. The league will be offering a rebate (or appreciation gift for non-parents) for High School Plate Umpires - \$10 rebate for parents, or a \$25 appreciation gift for non-parents. The umpire coordinator will use the umpire schedule to track and award refunds/gifts at the End-of-the-Season Party; please notify the umpire coordinator of any swaps or changes to the schedule.

Umpires will do their best to make informed and correct calls. However, umpires are humans and as such, are fallible. Please respect every call an umpire makes. Ridiculing or complaining against an umpire by anyone will not be tolerated. Coaches may call a time-out to respectfully and calmly confer together with the umpire regarding a call. Disputes or complaints about calls that cannot be resolved shall be discussed respectfully after the game with a league manager present.

Other Rules, Modifications & Game Information

- **T-ball** – Offense will bat through the line-up each inning. No outs. Three innings per game or one hour. **Focus on teamwork, fun, and skill-building.**
- **Super T-ball** – Offense will bat through the line-up each inning. If an out is made, that player leaves the field. However, continue to let all kids bat (regardless of number of outs.) Coach will pitch to his own players 3-5 pitches, at which time batter will hit off tee. Three innings per game or one hour. **Focus on teamwork, fun, and skill-building.**
- **9-12 teams** – Follows basic baseball/softball rules, however there is no stealing or sliding and there is a 5-run limit each inning. Two hour time-limit. **Focus on teamwork, fun, and skill-building.**
- **HS Teams** – Follows OSAA baseball/softball rules. Coaches are encourage to rotate players to a variety of positions. **Focus on teamwork, fun, and skill-building.**

Games

Game length shall be as indicated below; games are governed primarily by time and secondarily by the number of innings. The coach is responsible for the team’s readiness to start on time. Parents can help facilitate this by making sure their child is at the field early, dressed properly, and has spent a few minutes preparing with a team-oriented, Christ-centered focus prior to the game. Team parents are also encouraged to ask the coach how they can assist with preparing the team.

Game Format Information

Team	Game Time	Game Length (Innings)	Game Length (hours)	Runs per Inning Limit
T-ball	5:30-6:30 PM	3	1	Complete batting order
Super t-ball	5:30-6:30 PM 6:45-7:45 PM	3	1	Complete batting order
9-12 Softball	5:00-6:30 PM	~4	1 ½	5
9-12 Baseball	5:30-7:30 PM	5	2	5
HS JV Baseball	5:00-6:30 PM	*See note	*See note	5
HS Varsity Baseball	6:30 PM – Dusk	*See note	**See note	5
HS Softball	6:45 PM – Dusk	~3-4	**See note	5

Note: 9-12 Softball and HS Softball girls’ teams share field space on game night.

*High school boys’ teams share the field space on game night. The time allowed for each team will extend as the days get longer. In general, the time between 5:00pm and sunset will be divided evenly in two so both teams get about equal playing time.

**Note on varsity baseball and HS softball games: No inning will begin after sunset. If games are in the middle of an inning and it becomes too dark to play safely, the plate umpire has the right to terminate (“call”) the game. In this event, the final score is the score of the last completed inning. For example, if a game is called by the umpire in the middle of the sixth inning, the score at the end of the fifth inning would be the final score of the game.

If a spectator becomes disruptive, whether towards an umpire or the opposing team’s players, the umpire may elect to pause the game to deal with the offender. However, it is not the umpires’ job to deal with spectator issues, as their primary focus should be on the game they are officiating. Therefore, we are asking our coaches and parents to be aware of

spectators who are being disruptive, and lovingly encouraging them to be self-controlled and to stop any disruptive behavior.

Again, please remember that our umpires are volunteers. They will do their best to make informed and correct calls, but they will make mistakes. If you have concerns regarding a call by or performance of an umpire, please discuss this with your child's coach after the game. The coach will determine whether the issue should be discussed with the umpire or taken to the league manager.

We encourage coaches to work together through any issues, and to be open and respectful about communicating issues with the umpires. A coach may elect to take a concern with a specific umpire, coach or other volunteer to the league manager.

No one is allowed to play who is not a registered player- which means they have paid registration and they are on a team roster. On a case-by-case basis, for games where there are too few players to make a complete roster, coaches and umpires may confer and elect to share players between opposing teams, or to allow family members of registered players to play.

A note on First Aid: While the league strives to promote safety, injuries may occur. Each team is furnished a first aid kit and ice packs. In the event that your player is injured during the game, please do not rush out onto the field. The coaches and umpires will respond first, assess the injury, and request parents' assistance depending on the nature or degree of the injury.

Discipline Policy

- Coaches shall directly address offenses with their players.
- If behavior problems arise on the field, coaches or umpires are asked to gently but firmly correct the offender (player or spectator).
- At the second infraction, players will be benched for the remainder of the game (please notify parents and league managers); offensive spectators may be asked to leave.
- If there is a third infraction, the player may be dismissed from the league for the remainder of the season.
- Any adult has the ability to address an offensive issue (typically those off the field not observed by a coach) - and shall get the coach or an umpire involved if you feel it has not been resolved.

Rule Reminders and Modifications

This league has adopted the rules of the National Federation of State High Schools Association (NFSHS), with some modifications. Please note the following:

- Bat Length
 - Super t-ball and T-ball teams: Under 28”
 - 9-12 teams: Under 30”
 - 13+ teams: Under 34”
- Baseball will use Baseball or Little League Bats; Softball will use Softball bats.
- If the batter throws the bat, they will be called “out.”
- The batter shall wait until the umpire calls them by the phrase “Batter up.” The batter is required to step out of the batter’s box between pitches and wait for the umpire to invite them back for the next pitch.
- Since games are limited in duration, the umpire will help keep the game moving, including monitoring the time it takes to switch within and between innings. No more than 5 minutes should be spent for teams to switch between field and batting within an inning or switching innings.
- Coaches may wish to call time out if they would like clarification on a ruling.
- If a player is unclear why a call is made, the umpire should use this opportunity to call “time out” and have a ‘teaching moment’ with the player. Alternatively, the player can discuss with the coach on the sideline. This will assist the player in learning the details and rules of the game.
- If a team is trailing by more than 5 runs by the end of the inning preceding the final inning in a game, the game can be called since there would be no chance for that team to take the lead. This decision will be reached by the umpire conferring with both team’s coaches. If time and conditions permit, it is encouraged to finish the final inning of play since this gives players a chance to build upon their skills, teamwork, and sportsmanship.

Field Dimensions and Marking

Fields need to be marked before every game, using the chalk and chalker from the storage room at Barendse Park. The field coordinator is available for questions. Fields should be marked in the following order: HS boys, 9-12 girls/HS girls, 9-12 boys. T-ball and super t-ball fields do not get chalked.

Field Dimensions are as follows:

Team	Baseline Dimensions	Pitcher's Plate^A	Batter Box/Other
T-ball	50 ft plus 10 ft past 1 st and 3 rd	35 ft (where "pitcher" stands)	None
Super t-ball	60 ft plus 10 ft past 1 st and 3 rd	35 ft	None
9-12 Baseball	60 ft plus 15 ft past 1 st and 3 rd	45 ft; Chalk Pitcher Circle (10' diameter)	Chalk the batter boxes (both sides of home plate), approx. 3'x6' aligned 6" from home; Chalk the on deck batter circle (5' diam)
9-12 Softball	60 ft plus 15 ft past 1 st and 3 rd	35 ft; Chalk the Pitcher Circle (16' diameter)	Chalk the batter boxes (both sides of home plate), approx. 3'x6' aligned 6" from home; Chalk the on deck batter circle (5' diam)
High School Baseball	90 ft plus 15 ft past 1 st and 3 rd	60 ft; Chalk Pitcher Circle (18' diameter)	Chalk the batter boxes (both sides of home plate), approx. 4'x6' aligned 6" from home; Chalk the on deck batter circle (5' diam)
High School Softball	90 ft plus 15 ft past 1 st and 3 rd	40 ft; Chalk the Pitcher Circle (16' diameter)	Chalk the batter boxes (both sides of home plate), approx. 3'x7' aligned 6" from home; Chalk the on deck batter circle (5' diam)

^A Pitcher plate distance is from plate to plate (pitcher's plate to home plate), unless noted otherwise.