

*Should my child try out for travel baseball?* The answer depends on a number of factors:

- **Desire:** Travel baseball is competitive! The most important factor in determining whether your child should try out for a travel team is desire...your child's, not yours! Parents, coaches, and administrators want children to enjoy sports over a long period of time. Pushing your child beyond his/her desires can easily lead to burnout, and an aversion to the game in the future. Conversely, competitive travel baseball is a perfect outlet for players who have a self-motivated desire to compete in general, and a love for baseball/softball specifically, and these types of players will most likely enjoy their experience more in the travel league.
- **Skill Level:** Again, travel baseball/softball is competitive. Your child should be in the top half of players of similar age levels before trying out for a travel team. This will allow coaches to teach higher level fundamentals and strategy without leaving a player of lesser skill behind, and will allow the team to compete more effectively.
- **Team Orientation:** Your child should have a desire to be part of a team environment before trying out for travel baseball. The team travels and competes together, and a good teammate is often even more important than a player with raw skills. On a travel team parents and players must be ready for the potential to focus on playing a position that helps the team, but may not be the first choice of the player. Parents must also support the team, and commit to not causing conflict with the coaching staff.
- **Time Commitment:** Travel teams require players to practice more often and play more often. Many of the practices and games are on the weekends, and will require your support in terms of the schedule. The year usually lasts from January to July, while the house program begins practice in mid-April and finishes the year by mid July at the latest.
- **Cost:** Early registration fees for house baseball range from \$65 (t-ball) to \$150 (Mickey Mantle league) per season. The only additional costs are for minimal equipment like gloves and shoes. Requirements for travel teams are typically \$500 - \$1000 per player not including out of town travel costs and can be reduced via team fund-raising.

Worry about your child developing fast enough to play baseball at a high level (high school or beyond) should not be considered as a factor for playing travel ball. The head coach at Saline High School estimates that 90% of his varsity players come through the travel program. However, pushing a player into the travel program and beyond his/her desires can often backfire and cause a player who has the skills to play at advanced levels to burnout and turn away from the game.

The travel teams advance more quickly through learning of fundamental skills because they practice and play more, and the coaches are generally coaching players with consistent, above-average skills. However, the house program, supplemented with individual lessons, does provide an opportunity to develop fundamental skills that are consistent with the Saline high school baseball program in a less intense environment. If your child has the raw talent to compete at the high school level or beyond, it is most likely that their skills will develop satisfactorily in either program.

Whether you decide the travel or house program is right for your child, SAYBS is dedicated to providing a great experience either way, and we look forward to your participation.

Please see the additional comparisons made on the next page.





	AAA Travel	AA Travel	House All-Stars	House (All until age 9)
<b>Pre-Season Practices Season</b>	January - April Potentially Sept-April	January - April	April	April
<b>Players</b>	April - July	April - July	April - July	April - June
<b>Position Play</b>	Core from Saline Number allowed from outside Saline: 9yr old - 0, 10yrs - 4, 11yrs and up - 6 Tryouts not required	Majority from Saline School District Tryouts are required Number allowed from outside Saline: 9/10yr old - 0, 11yrs and up - 2	All from House League Tryouts are required	95% + from Saline
<b>Practices</b>	Coaches can play players at any number of positions (including a single position) Playing time is not guaranteed	Coaches can play players at any number of positions (including a single position) Playing time is to be fair and equitable	Coaches must play players in at least two positions	Encouraged to play all positions through age 12 Minimum number of innings on the infield ages 6-14
<b>League Games</b>	2 - 3 per week 1.5 - 2 hours each	2 - 3 per week 1.5 - 2 hours each	1 - 2 per week 1.5 hours each 3/week after team selected	1 - 2 per week 1.5 hours each
<b>Tournaments</b>	1 - 3 per week Approx 20 Games per year typically in Saline, Brighton, Novi, Farmington, Howell, Northville, etc. (typically 30 minutes to 1 hour travel distance)	1 - 2 per week Approx 20 Games per year typically in Saline, Ann Arbor, Milan, Adrian, Ypsi, Chelsea, etc. (typically 30 minutes travel distance)	1 - 2 per week 10 - 12 Games per year All located in Saline (Older leagues [13 yr old +] begin playing neighboring communities like AA, Adrian, Ypsi, Canton, etc)	1 - 2 per week 10 - 12 Games per year All located in Saline (Older leagues [13 yr old +] begin playing neighboring communities like AA, Adrian, Ypsi, Canton, etc)
<b>Weekends</b>	5 - 8 in total (typical locations being Canton, Battle Creek, Holland, Grand Rapids, northern Ohio and northern Indiana)  2 - 3 could require hotel stays  Potential of a week long World Series tournament in or out of state	3 - 4 in total (typical locations being in Michigan within 2 hour drive)	1 at regular season end in Saline during the week in the evenings Typical team will play 2 - 4 games 2 - 4 more after regular season (July)	1 at regular season end in Saline during the week in the evenings Typical team will play 2 - 4 games
<b>Cost</b>	Practices Some games and double-headers Tournaments take up entire weekends Game/Tournaments typically played on Holiday Weekends (Mother's Day, Father's Day, Memorial Day, and 4th of July)	Practices Some games and double-headers Tournaments take up entire weekends	Occasional games/practices on Saturdays, usually in June More Saturday practices after team is selected Post season tournaments take up entire weekends	Occasional games/practices on Saturdays, usually in June
	Team budgets range from \$6,000 to \$12,000 (\$500 to \$1,000 per player). Budgets do not include out of town travel costs and can be reduced via team fundraising events.	Team budgets range from \$6,000 to \$9,000 (\$500 to \$750 per player). Budgets do not include out of town travel costs and can be reduced via team fundraising events.	Registration fee of: \$65 (tball) - \$150 (18U) Additional funds required for post-season tournaments	Registration fee of: \$65 (tball) - \$150 (18U)