



County Commissioners of Kent County, MD Department of Parks & Recreation



Batting Cage and Pitching Machine Policies, Procedures, and Guidelines

These guidelines are developed by the Department of Parks and Recreation to govern usage of the batting cage at the Community Center and must be adhered to at all times. Failure to follow these guidelines will result in an immediate termination of usage privileges by all participants in the group. The department of Parks and Recreation reserves the right to terminate user privileges at any time.

Please read this document in its entirety and sign the accompanying release and waiver. The release, waiver, and signature page reflects your understanding of these policies and procedures. All members of your group are required to sign the release and waiver in order to utilize the Batting Cage facility and equipment. Members of your group under the age of 18 must have parental consent each time the batting cage and pitching machine are used.

In order to reserve the batting cage a rental application (select Gym B option) must be completed and submitted to Parks and Recreation with a \$150 refundable deposit unless the rental is requested under Kent County Youth League, then the deposit is waived. The requestor must be at least 21 years of age and the reservation must be a minimum of one hour. Once the requested date and time is approved and the rental payment (due within seven days of approval notification) is made, an approved contract will be issued for signature. Upon receiving the signed contract, the requestor must complete a mandatory orientation for use of the batting cage and pitching machine. The requestor must indicate whether the use will be for baseball or softball at the time of the request.

Pitching Machine (setting up the pitching machine- Only KCPR Staff will set up equipment)

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| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Prior to using the pitching machine, Facility Monitors inspect the power cord and all mechanical assemblies for damage. Do not use the machine if it is not in good working order. 2. Choose the correct pair of legs for the type of batting that you will be doing. Baseball legs are the longer legs and softball legs are the shorter legs. 3. Place the pitching machine on the floor being careful not to damage the feeder chute. The machine must be placed on top of the mat to keep it from scraping the floor and/or damaging the pitching machine. To adjust the legs of the pitching machine, use the metal push pins, adjust to desired height, and allow the pin to snap in the opening. Each leg can be adjusted the same way. Ensure the push pins on the legs are completely into the desired opening. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Find the wrench that you will need for the following steps. Wrenches are located on the shelf (labeled axle 2) in the box with the extra pitching machine chute. The wrench is labeled “pitching machine.” 5. Choose the correct ball feeder for the type of ball that you are using. The large feeder is for softballs, and the smaller feeder is for baseballs. Match the ball feeder bracket holes with the holes on the pitching machine. Put bolts in place and tighten. 6. Find the correct settings on the side of the pitching machine for the type of ball you will be using. Place the bracket in the correct setting and secure in place by tightening bolts. 7. Return the wrench to the tool kit once you have finished with it. 8. Set up the pitching machine behind the protective screen and plug the extension cord into wall the socket. |
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General Rules and Regulations

1. Only approved user groups will have access to the batting cage.
2. Batting Cage Supervisors/Pitching Machine Operators who use the pitching machine and the batting cage, must first complete a Batting Cage Orientation. There are NO EXCEPTIONS to this policy.
3. Only the Supervisors, who have completed the batting cage orientation, may feed balls into the pitching machine. Anyone under the age of 21 IS NOT PERMITTED to feed balls into the pitching machine.
4. Close supervision is necessary when the pitching machine is used with and near children. The pitching machine tire can cause severe physical harm and use must always be closely monitored. All users of the batting cage understand they use the batting cage and facility at their own risk. The County Commissioners and The Department of Parks and Recreation are not liable for any personal injury or equipment damage sustained in or around the batting cage or gym.
5. User groups will only allow participants who signed the waiver to use the batting cage.
6. User groups will only allow approved adults (21 years and older) to supervise the cage, set-up/take-down the cage, and operate the pitching machine.
7. The batting cage area must be supervised by an approved adult during scheduled usage.
8. The user group will take down the batting cage. All users are expected to keep the batting cage area clean and litter free.
9. All users (under the age of 21) must wear batting helmets while entering the cage and while batting.
10. Only (2) two people will be permitted in the cage at one time: the pitching machine operator and the batter.
11. The "L" screen must be used at all times while using the pitching machine.
12. Pitching machine adjustments must NOT be made while a batter is in front of the machine. All adjustments need to be made behind the machine. The speed of the machine should be set to the appropriate level for the age of the user.
13. User groups are only allowed to use the batting cage during their current reservation. Spectators must remain at least (3) three feet away from the batting cage.
14. Any equipment malfunction, damage to the batting cage area, or potential hazards must be reported to the contract holder and immediately to the Facility Monitor at the Welcome Desk. No one is permitted to pull, hang, put their hands into, or do anything to the batting cage netting.
15. Do not roll the pitching machine tire on surfaces that might cause damage to the tire. If the tire becomes deformed, flat, or damaged do not use it and notify staff on duty immediately.
16. Abuse of the equipment may cause the ball chute to weaken, crack, break, rot, etc. Be careful with the chute when you are changing the legs! **DO NOT STAND PITCHING MACHINE ON ITS CHUTE END.** While you are changing the legs, be careful not to bend, crack, or break the ball chute. Hand check and examine the ball chute before using. Do not use if there is a problem and notify staff on duty immediately.
17. Do not allow the pitching machine to fall on its wheel. This will damage the machine.

Batting Cage Supervisor (Contract Holder)

It is required that the Pitching Machine Operator spends a minimum of 10 minutes for training on the use of the pitching machine before using it for the first time with a batter. He/she should try different dial settings, different pitching angles, etc. before using with a live batter.

1. Adjust the speed on the pitching machine, being careful to match the machine's ball speed to the batter's ability level.
2. Allow the pitching machine to warm-up for approximately 1 minute before using it. After the warm-up, test the positioning of

the machine by feeding balls into it without a batter present. Adjust the height and speed of the ball as needed before calling the first batter to the plate to bat.

3. It is **EXTREMELY IMPORTANT** that the operator makes certain that the entire area in front of the pitching machine and the target is clear before feeding the machine.
4. The Pitching Machine Operator must first signal the batter and establish eye contact before inserting the ball into the pitching machine. The Operator must hold the ball the same way each time when feeding the ball into the machine. The Operator must hold the ball high into the air where the batter can see the ball. **VERY IMPORTANT:** Before placing the ball into the feeding chute, the Operator must look up at the batter to make absolutely certain that the batter is watching and is ready to receive the pitch. He/she must then bring the ball down to the chute simulating live action so that the batter can time the ball correctly. The Operator must watch the ball into the feed wheel, and then look up to the batter.
5. Do not put hands or fingers into the ball chute. Hand and fingers must not be positioned past the edge of the chute.

6. **DO NOT** throw high hopping grounders with the pitching machine.
7. Keep hands and loose clothing away from moving tires on the pitching machine. Severe physical harm will result if the tires catch body parts or clothing.
8. Never allow anyone except the adult Batting Cage Supervisor (Contract Holder) to go behind the protective screen near the pitching machine.
9. Out-of-round, soft, mushy, or wet balls will affect accuracy of pitches and **MUST NOT BE USED**. Mixing different types of balls (leather, rubber, etc.) will affect consistency of pitches. For best accuracy, throw only one type of ball at a time.
10. Only the balls that were specifically purchased for the pitching machine may be used in the pitching machine. **DO NOT USE BALLS WITH THREADS!** They will “eat” the tire on the pitching machine. Any ball other than those provided by KCPR will not be permitted.
11. The pitching machine must never be left unattended when it is plugged in. Unplug the machine from the outlet when it is not in use and before putting on, taking off, or adjusting parts.

Setting Up the Batting Cage: The Contract Holder must assist the Facility Monitor with setting up and putting away the Batting Cage.

1. The pitching machine, protective screen, specific use balls, and other batting cage equipment must be provided by staff on duty.
2. Put the appropriate protective screen in place and position the pitching machine behind it.
3. Put the required carpet on the floor and position it under the protective screen and pitching machine. The pitching machine may not be used without the carpet!
6. As you near the pitching machine and protective screen, lift the batting cage net up and over the equipment and continue walking the cage to the wall until you reach the other side of the gym.

4. Batting cage users who damage the equipment due to misuse will be responsible for the full cost of damages and replacement. Batting Cage Supervisors (Contract Holder) are responsible for making sure those helping them to set up the cage do so in a way that does not result in damages.
5. Grab the corner sides (**NOT THE ROPES**) of the batting cage and walk the batting cage slowly across the gym.
7. Hook the clamp from the rope on the batting cage to the metal circle on the wall (beside Gym B entry doors).

Taking Down the Batting Cage

1. Unhook clamp from the wall.
2. Holding on to the corner sides of the batting cage net; slowly walk the cage across the gym.
3. Lift the cage up and over the pitching machine equipment.
4. Secure the batting cage net to the wall using the bungee cords provided and ensure net is flush to the wall as close as possible so it is out of the way of the gym floor.

Kent County Parks and Recreation administrative employees reserve the right to implement additional regulations as deemed necessary.

