



BABA League Rules

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1 Rules

Rules of play include all the following guidelines:

- (1) on the Tournament Schedule page on www.bayareaball.org (BABA website)
- (2) in this document
- (3) in the "Rules for Nations Qualifying Tournaments and the Nations Texas Zone (State) Tournament", known commonly as the [Nations Texas Rules](#).
- (4) in the "Nations Baseball Guidelines & Regulations", known commonly as the "[Nations Baseball National Rules](#)" except where contradicted in (1) and (2)
- (5) Rules not mentioned or contradicted in the aforementioned rules defer to the [National Federation of High School Associations Baseball Rules Book](#), (NFHS) except where contradicted in (1), (2), and (3).
- (6) Balks are enforced according to the rules set forth in the [MLB rules](#).

The order of precedence is (1) BABA website, (2) BABA League Rules, (3) Nations Texas Rules, (4) Nations Baseball National Rules, (5) NFHS Rules Book, and (6) MLB rules (for balks only).

All these rules are on the Rules menu of www.bayareaball.org.



Please ask for clarification of any rule or situation prior to game time. League directors are not always present at games, so make sure you have the phone number of at least two BABA directors before your game.

2 League Format

The league is a series of games in which all teams in a division play each other an equal number of times or as near equal as the schedule allows. Variations of this format are published on the League Information pages of www.bayareaball.org and are valid for each league. A team is deemed to have participated in league when that team has completed play in the published number of games for that league.

2.1 Field Dimensions

The field dimensions are as follows. Slight variations can occur in some instances.

Age Division	Rubber-to-Plate Distance	Base-to-Base Distance
7U – 8U	40'	60'
9U – 10U	46'	65'
11U – 12U	50'	70'
13U – 14U	54'	80'



2.2 Equipment

There are no bat restrictions.

All game balls are provided by BABA and delivered by the umpires. BABA provides two leather game balls per game. If these balls are lost, managers must provide additional baseballs of reasonable quality. Umpires may use the two BABA-provided baseballs again for subsequent games if they are in reasonable condition (in the sole judgment of the umpires).

2.3 7U & 8U Specific

The following rules apply to coach-pitch divisions:

- 7U and 8U teams play closed bases with 10 players (four outfielders) if 10 or more players are present. Teams may play with nine players if only nine players are present. Teams with nine players are automatically the visiting team. Teams with less than nine players at any time forfeit the game.
- 7U and 8U batters are not permitted to bunt the ball or swing easy at the ball and are penalized with a foul ball for such action.
- If a ball hits the pitching coach, the following rules apply:
 - If, in the umpire's judgment, the coach did *not* make a legitimate attempt to get out of the way (of pitching player or thrown or batted balls), then the batter is declared out. No runners advance.
 - If, in the umpire's judgment, the coach *did* make an attempt to get out of the way, it is ruled a foul ball.
- The pitching coach must not coach either verbally or physically and must position himself as not to be an obstruction to the defensive team on any play.
- The pitching coach must have at minimum one foot touching the pitching rubber or line up on delivery of the pitch and do so from a *standing* position. The penalty for not doing so is a strike.
- 7U and 8U batters receive six pitches in which the batter must hit the ball or three strikes. If a batter hits a foul ball on the sixth pitch, he or she is allowed to continue batting until he or she either does not make contact with the ball or puts the ball in play.
- In 7U and 8U games, the ball is dead when it is returned to the infield and in the possession of a fielder and, in the umpire's judgment, all play has stopped: no defensive play is imminent and the lead runner has stopped attempting to advance.

3 League Standing Tie Breakers

The final league standings are based on the following:

- Best overall record
- Head-to-head
- Fewest runs allowed in all games
- Average run differential (maximum +8 or -8 per game)
- Coin toss (higher seed calls)



4 Forfeits

For equity with other teams in the league, at the end of the regular season, before tournament seeding, if applicable, both teams involved in a forfeit have their runs allowed (RA) increased by a number equal to their average number of RA in all their other games played in the league. **Exception:** if either team has more RA in the forfeited game than their average RA; their RA are increased by the number of RA in the forfeited game at the point of the forfeit.

5 Game Ties and Time Limits

In regular season games, if time expires and both teams are tied, the game ends in a tie.

The following time limit and inning standards apply.

Age Division	Time Limit	Full Game	Rain-Out Game
7U, 8U	1 hour 15 minutes	5.5 – 6 innings	2.5 – 3 innings
9U – 12U	1 hour 40 minutes	5.5 – 6 innings	2.5 – 3 innings
13U – 14U	1 hour 40 minutes	6.5 – 7 innings	3.5 – 4 innings

Following the inning guidelines above,

- If time expires and the home team is losing, the inning is completed.
- If the home team is ahead and at bat when time expires, the inning immediately ends, and the game is over.
- If it is not mathematically possible for the home team to win the game due to the run limit, the game ends. (See Rule 8.1).
- 8U and below have a seven run per inning maximum. 9U and above have no run maximum (though there are mercy rules).
- For full games and rain-out game lengths, [Nations Baseball](#) rules IX. C. 20. and IX. C. 21. addressing home and visiting team at bats in the last inning apply.
- An inning begins at the moment the third out is made in the previous inning.



All games played at Big League Dreams may have drop-dead time limits imposed.

6 Post-season Game Ties, Time Limits, and Home Team

In regular season games, if time expires and both teams are tied, the game ends in a tie. (The inning is completed as detailed in Rule 4, Forfeits)

For equity with other teams in the league, at the end of the regular season, before tournament seeding, if applicable, both teams involved in a forfeit have their runs allowed (RA) increased by a number equal to their average number of RA in all their other games played in the league. **Exception:** if either team has more RA in the forfeited game than their average RA; their RA are increased by the number of RA in the forfeited game at the point of the forfeit.

Game Ties and Time Limits.)



In ties in the season-ending tournament, if applicable, a new inning is started with the last out in the previous inning advancing directly to third base. Each team receives two outs per inning. Teams must hustle in and out as delay of game is not tolerated. The game is played until a winner is determined. If the league director determines that the game must be called (due to field owner restrictions) the following tie breakers can be used:

- Win/loss record
- Head to Head
- Runs Allowed
- Run Differential
- Coin Toss (higher seeded team calls)

Time limits and inning standards in Rule 4 apply to regular-season games and post-season games. Championship games at all fields except Big League Dreams are played by innings. Championship games at Big League Dreams are played by time. All post-season games must have a winner.



All Big League Dreams Sunday games must be finished by 5:15 according to Big League Dreams facility policies. Therefore, if a game runs over, the league director must make the following decisions on elimination and championship games:

- Shorten game times
- Do not play and award both teams first place
- Call the game as is (drop dead)
- Finish the inning
- Revert to previous inning

Delay of game when speed-up rules are in effect is not tolerated. Speed-up rules can be modified by the umpire or league director during this time. Enforcement of these policies falls under the Sportsmanship section (Rule 23). Teams delaying the game can have balls or strikes called every 10 seconds until corrected. Managers in violation can be ejected.

7 Home Team

In regular league play, home team is determined by coin flip 15 minutes prior to game start. In elimination rounds of the season-ending tournament, if applicable, the home team is determined by high seed. Dugouts are always available on a first-come, first-served basis.

8 Run Rules

The following run rules apply.

8.1 Total Run Maximum

A winner is declared if any team's run differential exceeds the totals in the following table.

Run Differential	After # Innings
-------------------------	------------------------



Run Differential	After # Innings
15 runs	3 innings
10 runs	4 innings
8 runs	5 innings

8.2 Per Inning Run Max

The following per-inning run rules apply.

Age Division	Maximum Runs per Inning
7U – 8U	7 (mathematical elimination applies)
9U – 14U	no maximum

9 Rainouts

All rainout notices are posted on www.bayareaball.org. It is the responsibility of the manager or his or her designee to check this website if weather is threatening and to notify all of his or her players. Do not call the league director or Big League Dreams!

Check the website at 4:30. Big League Dreams and the other field owners will not make a determination before 4:30. Please do not contact the directors before this time!

Big League Dreams can take a lot of rain, so don't assume a game is rained out even if it rained hard all day in the League City area.

10 Suspended & Complete Games

A game is ruled as official and complete if umpires or the director rule as such due to inclement weather, lighting failure, Big League Dreams field constraints, or other reasons beyond our control. In case of rain delays, game times can be reduced. Drop-dead times might be in effect at Big League Dreams.

If a game is called early and ruled as a complete game, the final score reverts to the last complete inning unless the home team is at bat and ahead, in which case the final score is the score at the time the game is called.

11 Player & Team Eligibility

The following team and player eligibility rules apply.

11.1 Nations Baseball Registration

To register for league, all teams must be registered with Nations Baseball and have a roster with at least nine players online with Nations Baseball. Eight-and-under teams and below must have at least 10 players. Register at www.nations-baseball.com. See the Start a New Team page on www.bayareaball.org for information on registering your team.



11.2 Proof of Insurance

Teams must have in-force team liability and accident insurance to play. Nations Baseball registration includes insurance.

11.3 Birth Date Requirements & Proof of Age

A player's age is determined by the Nations Baseball age rules. If a team is unable to produce a copy of a player's birth certificate upon request, the player is removed from the league until such document is produced, and the team forfeits the game in question until a certificate for that player is provided. (The game should be continued under the assumption that the certificate is forthcoming.) Team age is determined by the age of the oldest player on April 30 of the current baseball season (July 31 – August 1).



If a player is certified with Nations Baseball, that is, if his or her birth certificate is on file, attached to his or her roster history, and approved, the manager does not have to carry that player's birth certificate, and that player's age cannot be questioned on the field.

11.4 Roster Requirements

All teams are required to set up and maintain the Nations Baseball team roster with at least nine players prior to registration. *Managers must update their Nations Baseball team roster for all changes made to the roster during regular season play. All players on your team must be on your Nations Baseball roster during league games.*



Nations Baseball rules require that all players on your roster must use the names and birthdates as stated on their birth certificates. See the Start a New Team page of www.bayareaball.org for information on adding players to your roster.

12 Pregame Warm Up

All team pregame warm-ups are allowed in the designated warm-up areas if previous game is still being played. Infield warm-ups are allowed between games, if allowed by the field owner, and time is split between both teams, provided there is time available before the scheduled start time of the game. The game will start at the scheduled start time or immediately following the previous game.

Managers must have their lineups ready, pitchers warmed up, and all players warmed up in the designated areas before the scheduled start time of the game.

13 Speed-Up Rules

The following speed-up rules are always in effect:

- Teams must hustle in and out of the dugout at all times.
- A courtesy runner is mandatory for the catcher with two outs. The courtesy runner must be a player who is not active in the lineup. If roster batting, the last recorded batted out is the courtesy runner.



- One offensive time out per inning per team.
- Pitchers shall be allowed no more than eight preparatory pitches at the beginning of each inning or when relieving another pitcher, during which play is suspended (but time is not).
- The coach must warm up the pitcher if the catcher is not ready.

14 Scorekeeping

The home team provides the official scorekeeper and must be seated convenient to the home plate umpire. The visiting team must provide someone to operate the scoreboard (if a scoreboard is available for use).

15 Coaches

Teams may have four adults coaching from the dugout. Defensive coaches must stay in the dugout or within an arm's reach to the entrance of the dugout. Any coach attempting to coach outfielders must do so from the dugout area.

16 Lineup Cards

Each manager must prepare a written copy listing each player and substitute by name and uniform number prior to each game. Lineups must be provided to the plate umpire, the opposing team, and the official scorekeeper.

17 Starting a Game: Number of Players & Start Time

The following rules apply to starting a game:

- 9U – 14U teams must have a minimum of eight players to start a game. If a team has fewer than eight players to start the game, the game is declared a suspended game by the umpire. The league director then rules the game a forfeit, and it is not rescheduled.
- 7U – 8U teams must have a minimum of nine players to start a game. If a team has fewer than nine players to start the game, the game is declared a suspended game by the umpire. The league director then rules the game a forfeit, and it is not rescheduled. 7U – 8U teams must play with 10 players if 10 or more players are present.
- If a team has players arriving late to the game, the manager of that team must make an announcement at the plate conference before the game begins and advise both the plate umpire and the opposing team that he or she has a player or players that will be arriving late. When the player or players arrive, he or she is announced to both the plate umpire and the opposing team and is placed in the last spot in the batting order. The game resumes as if he or she was there at the start of the game.
- In 9U and above, should the ninth player have to leave the game, a team can continue with eight players, provided they take an out for the ninth player for each scheduled turn at bat. The team is required to take an out only if the number drops below nine for a reason other than illness or injury.
- In 9U and above, teams having fewer than nine players to start a game are automatically the visiting team.
- In 8U and below, teams having fewer than 10 players to start a game are automatically the visiting team.
- In 9U and above, teams can start and continue a game with eight players provided they take an out for the ninth player.
- A player already in the game who leaves the game for any reason cannot return to the lineup.
- If a team has not taken the field ten minutes after the scheduled start time of a game (or the rescheduled start time if the previous game was delayed), the game is declared a forfeit by the league director.



18 Time between Innings & Timeouts

A maximum of eight pitches are allowed between innings with time starting on the third out. A sportsmanship penalty is imposed if the delay, in the umpire's judgment, is excessive and slowing down the progress of the game. There are a maximum of 60 seconds between innings and for timeouts, including visits to the pitcher and catcher.

19 Roster Batting

If a team is roster batting and a player on the original lineup card arrives late, he or she can be added to the end of the batting order provided the player is announced to both the plate umpire and the opposing team when he or she arrives to the field. Once announced, the player is placed at the end of the batting order.

Players who must leave before the end of the game may do so. Their position in the batting order is ignored for the rest of the game, and no out is charged provided Rule 17 is followed.

In 8U and below, roster batting is required.

20 Defense, Courtesy Runner, & Batting Substitutions

7U and 8U managers can use free substitution defensively, but the batting order must remain the same. 9U and above teams can use free substitution only when batting their roster.

Managers in 9U through 14U divisions must declare before the game if they are batting their roster or using an EH.

The 9U and up catcher or pitcher of record can receive a courtesy runner at any time: catcher only in 8U and below. If a 9U and above team is batting the roster, the courtesy runner must be the last batted out, unless that player is also the pitcher or catcher of record. A courtesy runner can run one time per inning. If ineligible to run, the courtesy runner shall be the previous batter not on base. If a courtesy runner is deemed ineligible, a proper replacement can be made without penalty. If a proper replacement is not available, the pitcher or catcher must run for themselves.

If a team is not batting all players in the dugout, then the courtesy runner must be an available substitute that is not currently in the lineup. The courtesy runner is mandatory for the catcher with two outs.

21 Infield Fly Rule

The infield fly rule is in effect for 9U and above only.



22 Pitching Rules

The following pitching limits are in effect.

22.1 Number of Outs

Age	Max Number of Consecutive Days to Pitch	Max Outs Per Day	Outs Per Week (Monday - Sunday)
9U – 10U	3	18	27
11U – 12U	3	18	27
13U – 14U	3	21	30

22.2 Removal from Pitching Position

A player removed from the pitching position cannot return to the pitching position for the remainder of the game. The pitcher can move to another defensive position or to the dugout. Once a pitcher has been removed from the pitching position, he or she can move to or later re-enter the game in another defensive position, but cannot return as a pitcher in that same game.

22.3 Penalty for Exceeding Pitching Limits

Failure to comply with pitching limits results in the pitcher in question being declared illegal, forfeiture of game, and the pitcher becoming ineligible to pitch for 72 hours. If a pitcher goes over their limit on a last out being a multiple out, he or she is not deemed illegal if removed immediately from the pitching position.

22.4 Balks

Balks are applicable in all 9U and above divisions, with one warning per pitcher at the 9U and 10U levels. A balk with no runners on base is a ball. Balks are determined according to MLB rules.

22.5 Trips to the Mound & Defensive Conferences

In 9U and above, when a team is charged with its second trip to the mound in the same inning to the same pitcher, the pitcher must be removed from the pitching position. Teams are allowed three defensive conferences (with any player) in which the pitcher is not removed from the pitching position. See NFHS rule 3-4-1.

22.6 Intentional Walks

Intentional walks in 9U and above and can be pitched or declared to the umpire by the pitcher or catcher. There are no intentional walks in 7U and 8U.

23 Sportsmanship

The following sportsmanship rules apply.



23.1 Rule Interpretation Disagreements

The managers are responsible to have a copy of the latest rules that are posted on the www.bayareaball.org website on the Rules menu. A notice will be emailed to the email address on file for that manager notifying them of any rule clarifications or changes during the season. If there is a rule interpretation question on the field, the managers must request a rule interpretation from the umpire on the field and present the rule book to the umpire. The umpire's interpretation of the rule is the official interpretation. If the managers have two separate versions of the rules, the version with the most recent date is the official rule book for that dispute. The rules on the website always have precedence. Umpire judgment calls are not subject to interpretation.

Only the team manager is permitted to address an umpire or BABA director and must do so quietly and professionally. Any non-manager addressing the umpire or director is subject to ejection at the umpire's or director's discretion. A coach may call time out at any time to discuss issues with his or her team manager, provided he or she does not make a habit out of it. The team manager determines if it is appropriate to bring the matter to the plate umpire. We must remember that we are setting the example for the players and act professionally at all times. The manager can quietly address the umpire on rule interpretation issues or any rule question but not on judgment calls.

Managers are responsible for the behavior of their fans and players and shall address any inappropriate behavior. Razzing, heckling, or making disparaging remarks towards opponents in any manner is prohibited and may result in ejections.

23.2 Sportsmanship Penalty

The umpire can call balls or strikes every 10 seconds on the team not complying, until corrected. Profanity is cause for ejection.

24 Malicious Contact

In advancing to any base with intent to break up a double play or where a tag is evident, a player must seek to avoid malicious contact as determined by the judgment of the umpires. Position players may not block a base (including home plate) without the ball. Any such play is a judgment call by the umpires, and their ruling is final.

25 Squeeze Plays & Slashing

If a runner attempts to steal home and the batter swings at the pitch, the batter is called out, the runners return to their bases, and the third-base coach is ejected.

If a batter squares to bunt and then swings at the pitch (slashing), *with or without* runners on base, the batter is out, the runners go back to their bases, and the third-base coach is ejected. This rule applies to all age divisions.

26 Protests

As BABA directors are not always present during league games, the umpires address any disputed rules violations immediately, and the decision of the umpire is final. Managers are responsible for carrying a copy of the rules listed in Section 0 at all games. Umpires do not carry rule books with them.

If an umpire or coach is consistently involved in disputes over rule interpretations, the situation is addressed by a BABA director according to Rule XI of the "Nations Baseball Guidelines and Regulations" as published www.nations-baseball.com. Email league@bayareaball.org for the phone numbers of the BABA directors in case the need for an official protest occurs during a game.



27 Ejections

Any manager, coach, player, or fan ejected from the game must leave the park immediately, and a \$100 sportsmanship retainer is charged to the team. The retainer is refunded if there is no further interference by the individual through the season. If the individual is ejected a second time, the team forfeits the retainer, and the individual is not allowed into any BABA facility until written request is made by the manager of the team. Failure to comply results in a team forfeit. If the ejected person is a coach or manager, they are not permitted to participate in the next game, but may be allowed to attend the game at the discretion of the league director.

28 No Food or Beverages

Absolutely no food, beverages, or personal coolers are allowed in the park unless no concession stand is operating. Check the BABA Park Rules link on the League Information page for the park rules for your age division. This policy is strictly enforced under the Sportsmanship section of our rules.

29 Dugout Responsibilities

Managers are responsible for ensuring that the dugout and fan areas are free of trash and personal items after the game. Teams not complying with this rule will be billed for any trash clean-up fees that BABA incurs as a result.

30 Post-Game Score Reporting

The team managers are responsible for signing the game score card before leaving the field. Failure to sign the game card within 15 minutes after the game means that you are in agreement with what is on the card. (Umpires usually leave with the card immediately after the game, so for all practical purposes you must verify and sign the card immediately after the game; you won't have 15 minutes. If you miss the umpire, you can find the game card in the office at Big League Dreams or the concession stand at Bobby Beach. You must catch the umpire at Godard Park.)

All scores are reported on Nations Baseball to add to your power rating—provided your team submits the scores on the BABA score reporting site within 72 hours of the game.

Teams are responsible for reporting the scores on the league schedule page on www.bayareaball.org. You use the login (your email address) and password you specified when you registered for league. You state whether you are home or away and type the score as recorded in your scorebook. As long as both teams have the same score, the game cards are generally not consulted. If the scores differ, the score on the game card is official. If the scores differ and no game card is available, the score from the home team is official. If only one team reports scores within 72 hours, that score is official. Instructions for using the score reporting site are at <http://www.bababaseball.org/spring/help.htm>. If the scores are not reported by either team within a reasonable time (72 hours for example), the scores for that game are not reported on Nations Baseball.



Reported scores are checked against game cards at random. Teams reporting inflated scores or reducing their runs allowed are subject to discipline.

BABA posts the scores on the Nations Baseball website within one week after the game. If any team manager feels that the scores are posted incorrectly, they must email the director at league@bayareaball.org. If one week passes



Bay Area Baseball Association

league@bayareaball.org

and no notice of incorrect scores is received, the posted scores become final. BABA reserves the right to make exceptions to this policy under extenuating circumstances only.



Due to programmatic difficulties, the standings on Nations Baseball may be incorrect until the league is complete. The director must override the default standings on the Nations Baseball site. This override procedure is performed once at the end of the league.

31 Contacting the League

To contact the league, use the [Contact the Council](#) page of www.bayareaball.org or send an email to league@bayareaball.org.