



BASES LOADED™

Turning a game of failure into a game of success!



More Action! More Fun!

Baseball for the Young Athlete

(Pee Wees & Rookies 4-6 year olds)

Bases Loaded is a game developed by Sportstrata (sportstrata.com) and our organization to make baseball as fun and developmentally-appropriate as possible for young athletes under 8 years old. By starting each at bat with the bases loaded and by having all defensive throws always come home, we have retained the aspects of the game that develop the basic skills of fielding, throwing, hitting, and running while eliminating what to the youngest players are the slow, boring, and confusing aspects of the game.

Bases Loaded transforms baseball from a game of failure to a game of success and builds the love of the game that can yield long-term participation!

Basic Rules:

- For purposes of both hitting and fielding, each team is subdivided into two squads – equally if there is an even number of players present – so that there is an equal opportunity for hitting, base running, fielding, and cheering.
- The bases are loaded to start every at-bat so the runners must run on every ball in play.
- The hitting team’s coach is the pitcher on his/her knees, pitching underhand or overhand, but underhand is recommended.
- The fielding team’s coach is the catcher.
- The batter gets unlimited swings to put the ball in play, with help from a coach if necessary. Balls and strikes are not counted.
- Each half inning ends when all the members of the offensive batting squad have come to bat once. There are no outs.
- Every batter reaches base, except on a pop-out.
- The ball must go farther than the 10’ line from home plate to be in play. If not, the batter continues to bat.

- The fielding team can only stop the runners by throwing the ball to their catcher coach at home. It is the umpire's discretion to stop play on such throws. Tags or force plays are not made at any base. However, a run is not counted if the runner at 3rd base does not reach home before a thrown ball reaches the catcher coach or the batted ball is caught before it touches the ground. In all other instances, the runner either advances to the following base or remains at a base – he/she is never out.
- Infielders must stay in the infield, and outfielders must stay in the outfield.
- There is no bunting, leading, stealing, or infield fly rule.
- Games shall be 6 innings or must end one hour and forty-five minutes after the scheduled start time regardless of which team is coming to bat. If the home team is behind and does not get a chance to take or finish its last at bat, the score shall revert to the score at the close of the last complete inning. Fields must be cleared in time for the next scheduled game to start.

Rules about force plays and tag plays, when to run and where to throw the ball, only confuse and slow down the game of baseball for young athletes. By simplifying the rules, kids can play naturally and enjoy practicing the skills they are learning.

Set-Up:

Team Set-up:

- Assuming 12 players per team; Each team is divided into two squads of 6. (If there are more or fewer than 6, then as evenly as possible.) They remain in their squads during the offensive and defensive portions of the game. If there are more or fewer than 12 players, see the explanation below.
- 4 coaches per team
- 1 umpire per game

Field Set-Up:

- 50' base paths, 10' in-play line, 15' pitcher's line, 2 designated on-deck areas, triangle pointing towards 1st base but a few steps from home plate where players are to place their bats after hitting the ball.

Offense:

Offensive Rules:

- Each inning the squads are assigned offensive roles: either batters or runners.
- 6 players will hit in each half-inning (the "batters"), and 6 players will serve only as baserunners throughout the half-inning (the "runners") – running squad and batting squad.
- If there are more or fewer than 12 players, then the number of players that bat each half inning shall be equal the largest batting squad on either team. (Example: if there are 13 total players present on one team and 12 on another, both teams will bat 7 players each half inning with the team having 12 batting one player from their runner squad to raise their batting squad from 6 to

7. The coach should alternate players from the running squad to fill that extra batting slot each inning.)

- Each inning starts with the first “batter” at the plate and the first three “runners” on the bases.
- If the batter puts the ball in play and does not pop out, he/she shall remain on the bases to run. If the batter pops out, he/she sits and no runners advance.
- If the batter hits anything more than a single, the bases behind him/her must be filled from the runners’ squad of that team, with the batter remaining on base.
- Runners cannot advance past or to the same base as runners in front of them. After each play, empty bases are filled from the runners squad to start the next play.

Offensive Coach Roles:

- The offensive team will have coaches at the following positions:
 - pitcher,
 - 1st base,
 - 3rd base,
 - on the bench.
- The **pitcher coach** is responsible for pitching to the batter preferably underhand at the home plate.
- The **bench coach** is responsible for
 - coaching the batter, if necessary,
 - filling empty bases with runners,
 - keeping track of the batting order,
 - reminding the batter NOT TO THROW THE BAT but to place it in a designated marked triangle pointing to first base where the batters must drop the bat on their way to first base. Unmonitored bat swinging is the most dangerous part of baseball at this age. Extreme care should be taken by the coaches to avoid accidents involving the bat.

The Bench Coach can get assistance from parents to help with the batting order and placement of runners on base.

- The **base coaches** are responsible for the baserunners and to make sure every base is filled before each at-bat. The base coaches are also responsible for helping the runners know when to run and when to hold. Simple signs should be taught to the players that indicate keep going or stop at the base.
- A parent should also be appointed to watch the players to make sure that only the batter and the player in the on-deck circle are holding bats. **IMPORTANT RULE:** Only the batter and the on-deck batter in the on-deck circle are allowed to hold a bat.

These rules will maximize the number of offensive players involved. More action and less waiting around is key for athletes this age to remain engaged. Batters will experience far more success than with traditional baseball rules, increasing the confidence and enjoyment they experience in the game. Players will also learn the basic baseball skill of picking up base coaches as they round the bases (and learning baserunning signs), something even older players tend to have a very difficult time with.

Defense:

Defensive Rules:

- Each inning, the same two squads that were created for offense are assigned defensive roles: either fielders or cheerers. (At the end of the rules see a suggested way to allocate the squads for each half inning of a six-inning game.)
- Each squad alternates playing in the field in their defensive half-innings: one squad is in the field while the other is cheering for them.
- Players are positioned at the traditional infield positions (1st, 2nd, SS, 3B) and left-center and right-center in the outfield. If there are seven on a squad, then allocate the players to the normal left, center and right fielder outfield positions.
- Players should be rotated throughout the game and the season so they all have a chance to try every position.

Defensive Coach Roles:

- The defensive team will have coaches at the following positions:
 - Catcher (to receive throws from the fielders and pitches that are not hit)
 - in the outfield
 - on the bench.
- The **catcher/coach** is responsible for
 - Standing at home plate putting his/her hands in the air and calling for the ball once the ball is in play.
 - After a ball is hit into play, making sure the batter places the batter in the designated area and if it ends up at home plate, clearing the bat away from the home plate area so that none of the players will trip and hurt themselves on it.
- The **coach in the outfield** is responsible for defensive positioning and coaching. They also enforce the rule that infielders must stay in the infield and outfielders stay in the outfield.
- The **bench coach** is responsible for the players on the bench. This coach should be engaged with these players, helping to cheer on the players in the field while explaining what is going on.
- A parent should also be appointed to back up the catcher in case of errant throws or passed balls.

Oftentimes baseball at this age turns into amoeba-ball, with every player chasing the ball no matter where it is hit. These rules emphasize the importance of staying in your position and working together as a team to get the ball back into the catcher. Players will be introduced to the terminology and positioning of defensive baseball both on and off the field. The importance of cheering for your teammates will be highlighted as well.

Scoring:

- Every team bats their batting squad each half inning. Once all the batters in batting squad have batted once, that half inning is over. There are no outs. Alternate positions in the batting lineup each game so that the same player isn't always the last batter. (At the end of these rules is a suggested lineup sheet to assist the planning of the game in accordance with our recommendations.)
- The umpire shall keep score and stop the runners by blowing the whistle when the ball has been thrown back to the catcher. If the ball is thrown over the catcher's head or in some other direction out of bounds, the umpire should call the play dead after allowing the runners to advance to the base he/she was going at the time the whistle is blown. This is a discretionary ruling, that cannot be challenged.
- The umpire will have the discretion to determine if a runner (from whichever base he/she last touched) stays at third or scores based on whether that runner passed halfway down the line when the whistle was blown.
- If the pitcher coach is struck by a batted ball, the ball is dead and the hitter is awarded first base and all baserunners advance one base.
- There are only two situations when a run will not occur:
 - a pop fly that is caught, or
 - if the ball reaches the coach-catcher at home plate from a fielder before the runner who was on 3rd base *at the start of the play* reaches home. In that case, the runner from 3rd base simply goes to the bench and all the runners advance one base resulting in all bases being loaded. No run is counted. The coach-catcher does not have to be on home plate, but must be within the in-play area. The base-runner does not have to touch home plate, but should precede the throw to the coach-catcher. These are discretionary calls by the umpire that cannot be challenged.
- Once the runner on 3rd has scored, the play is no longer a force out at home. The likelihood of young athletes this age catching a pop up or throwing the 3rd base runner out at home is low, and so will almost all plays result in at least one run scored.
- Each at-bat produces between 0 and 4 runs, with a maximum of 24 runs scored in the inning (if there are 6 batters).
- Single = 1 Run; Double = 2 Runs; Triple = 3 Runs; HR = 4 Runs
- Pop out or 3rd base runner who does not beat the throw to home = 0 runs

Post-Game Handshakes and Thank You to Coaches:

- At the end of the game the teams must line up on their closest baseline and walk towards home plate to shake hands and say "good game" to their opponents and "thank you coach" to the opposing coaches. Then they should make a U turn to the left where they should shake the hands of their coaches saying "thank you coach."

Umpire's Responsibilities:

- Keep score
- Make sure that batting helmets are worn by all batters and baserunners
- Stop play and returning the batter to hit if the ball does not cross the 10' line in front of home plat
- Stop the runners by blowing the whistle when the ball has been thrown back to the catcher.
 - If the ball is thrown over the catcher's head or in some other direction out of bounds, the umpire should call the play dead after allowing the runners to advance an extra base.
 - The umpire will have the discretion to determine if a runner stays at third or scores based on if that runner passed halfway down the line when the whistle was blown.
- Keep the game moving and informing the coaches, based on the time, what will be the last inning or half inning.
- Make sure that at least one team has their defibrillator present.
- Have the coaches and parents inspect and clean the field for dangerous objects (glass, etc.) before the start of the game.
- Make sure that the teams complete their pre-game warmup routine.
- Make sure that the players complete the hand shake and coach thank yous at the end of the game
- Make sure the teams and parents clear the field quickly so that the following game can start on time.
- Enforce the Code of Conduct as noted below with the assistance of the coaches.

The umpire should be positioned between the pitcher and 2nd base. If there is more than one umpire, the second should be positioned close to either foul line in foul territory unless the umpires should decide otherwise.

Scoring in baseball is fun and exciting! We want as many young athletes to feel the rush of advancing runners, getting RBI's, and crossing home plate as possible. Players will learn to understand and appreciate the role of rules and to accept the authority of the umpire who is charged with enforcing the rules. We also want to have a game that matches their capacity to learn and minimizes the risk of injury. Finally. shaking opponents' hands after the game and thanking the coaches teaches good sportsmanship and appreciation. Play Ball!

CODE OF CONDUCT

No coach, player, parent or spectator shall use foul or offensive language or gestures or engage in any physical act of intimidation while on or near the field. They are grounds for ejection from the game and the organization.

Taunting and distracting players or coaches by players, coaches and spectators are prohibited. Root for your team, not against the opposition. Only positive rooting for one's own team is permitted.

Coaches must assist the umpire in applying these rules and in controlling fans who are disruptive, use foul language, or otherwise act in a manner that is contrary to the rules or spirit of the goals our organization.

The umpire has the power to suspend or cancel a game if coaches, parents, or spectators become abusive or hinder the playing of the game.

Only players, coaches and scorekeepers are to occupy the bench area. Everyone else must watch the game from out of bounds.

A parent who is not a coach is never permitted on the field of play or in the dugout area for any reason during the game.

An umpire's judgment call can never be challenged. An umpire can only be politely challenged on the interpretation of a rule by the Head Coach only. All discussion with the umpires must be carried out in a courteous voice and manner. The umpire has the authority to eject coaches and abusive spectators under penalty of forfeit.

No food or drink is permitted on the field of play. No food is allowed in the dugout out area during game time. Coaches may not smoke or consume alcoholic beverages during any practice and during any game. All rules promulgated by the organization that controls the field must be obeyed.

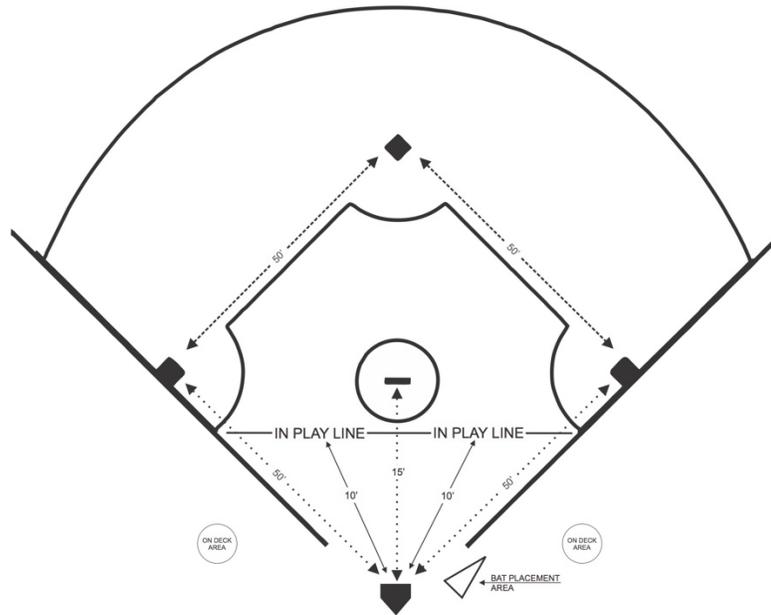
All players must be in full uniform (hat, jersey and pant). All batters and base runners must wear protective helmets. (Protective cups are recommended to worn for all other players but at the discretion of the parents or coach.)

Since the only base a play can be made is at home, it is possible that player will attempt to slide. That is permitted, though not encouraged. However, head first sliding is never allowed. Since the catcher is an adult coach, to avoid potential injury to a baserunner, the catcher should be careful not to block the base.

* * *

HOTLINE FOR CANCELLATION INFORMATION
(If there is no message, the policy is to come to the field for a game)
877 407-7878

FIELD SETUP



PRE-INNING ROUTINES

1/ For the 1st inning:

A/ For the top half of the 1st inning only:

- (i) The team that will be in the field first (the home team) will line up on the baseline on the same side of the field as their dugout (starting about 10' beyond the base) and complete the Pre-Game Exercise Drills starting on the base line about 10' beyond the base on their side of the field.
- (ii) At the same time the team that will be batting first (the away team) runs the bases – one at a time, each runner takes a mock swing with a bat, drops it on the triangle and runs around all the bases. When each batter-runner reaches 2nd base, the next batter does the same thing until all players have swung the bat, placed it on the triangle and reached home plate.

B/ For the bottom half of the 1st inning, the above is repeated by each team.

2/ For every inning starting with the 2nd inning, the defense will warmup by having the Coach-Catcher roll the ball once to each fielder, who will throw the ball directly back to the Coach-Catcher. The Coach-Catcher should have three balls so that he/she can keep the warmup moving quickly by not having to chase errant throws.

78th PRECINCT YOUTH COUNCIL - PEE WEES & ROOKIES

GAME BATTING ORDER & FIELD POSITIONS

TEAM: _____

GAME DATE: _____

PLAYERS

FIELDING POSITIONS BY INNING

SQUAD 1

Shirt #	NAME	1	2	3	4	5	6
1							
2							
3							
4							
5							
6							
7							
8							

SQUAD 2

Shirt #	NAME	1	2	3	4	5	6
1							
2							
3							
4							
5							
6							
7							
8							

Recommended Approach to Batting Order so that the last batter has a greater chance to run the bases.

The numbers on the left are the batting order for each squad, but every inning start from the next position.

So in the second inning start with the batter in the #2 position. That way no one is the last batter.

Then the following week reverse the order, etc.

EXERCISE DRILLS

BEAR CRAWL (on all 4s) **JUMP BACK & FORTH** -FRONT TO BACK

SIDE SLIDE (don't cross feet, head up, glove on ground) **JUMP SIDEWAYS**

HI KNEE SKIP **ARM STRETCHES** (across chest)

BROAD JUMPS - slow, balanced, explode off toes **ARM STRETCHES** (above head))

ADVANCED: Backward Crawls

Drills should be along the base line from just past either 1st or 3rd base towards the outfield

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CONCEPT FOR ALLOCATING SQUADS IN A GAME

<i>(Reason: Allow Runners to Rest)</i>						
INNING:	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th
IF AWAY TEAM-BATTING TOP OF INNING						
	Top of Inning					
<i>Squad 1:</i>	Batters	Runners	Batters	Runners	Batters	Runners
<i>Squad 2:</i>	Runners	Batters	Runners	Batters	Runners	Batters
	Bottom of Inning					
<i>Squad 1:</i>	Fielders	Cheering	Fielders	Cheering	Fielders	Cheering
<i>Squad 2:</i>	Cheering	Fielders	Cheering	Fielders	Cheering	Fielders
IF HOME-TEAM BATTING BOTTOM OF INNING						
	Top of Inning					
<i>Squad 1:</i>	Fielders	Cheering	Fielders	Cheering	Fielders	Cheering
<i>Squad 2:</i>	Cheering	Fielders	Cheering	Fielders	Cheering	Fielders
	Bottom of Inning					
<i>Squad 1:</i>	Batters	Runners	Batters	Runners	Batters	Runners
<i>Squad 2:</i>	Runners	Batters	Runners	Batters	Runners	Batters