



More Action! More Fun!

Baseball for the Young Athlete

Pee Wees (4-5 year olds)

Bases Loaded is a game developed with Sportstrata (sportstrata.com) to make baseball as fun and developmentally-appropriate as possible for young athletes. Its goal is to transform baseball from a game of failure to a game of success and build the love of the game!

Hitting is off a batting tee, bases are loaded for every at bat, all players bat each inning, and the goal of the defense is to prevent a run from scoring by having the ball arrive at home plate prior to a runner. These rules retain the aspects of the game that develop the basic skills of fielding, throwing, batting, and running. At the same time, they hold the attention of the youngest players and make the game fun and less confusing.

THE RULES

1) Game Time & Length:

- a) Games must end either after 5 innings or one hour and forty-five minutes after the scheduled start time regardless of which team is coming to bat.
- b) 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.
- c) Games will be canceled via a hotline message – 877-407-787. If there is no message or it is an old message, the policy is to come to the field for a game.

2) Offense:

- a) **Who Bats and When:**
 - i) All players hit off a batting tee,
 - ii) All players bat each half inning,
 - iii) Each half inning ends after the last batter has batted.
 - iv) If the teams have a different number of players present, the team with fewer players should bat extra players so that each inning the teams bat the same number of players.
 - v) Stagger the batting order so that the same batter does not always bat last, for example

- (1) during the game start each inning from a different position in the batting order (i.e. start with the batter in the first slot in the first inning, start the second inning with the batter who bats in the second slot, and so on) and
- (2) alternate positions in the batting lineup from game to game so that the same player isn't always the last batter. (See the Example below.)
- b) **Every Batter Reaches Base, except** when a fly ball is caught in the air or if the ball does not travel past the 10' in-play line from home plate. If the ball does not pass the in-play line, the batter continues to bat.
- c) **Runners on Base:** Every inning and every new at bat starts with bases loaded. If a base becomes empty as a result of a hit, the offensive bench coach will fill the empty base(s) with any available offensive player who is not soon to bat. When the players come off the field, they should all put on their batting helmet.
- d) **Strikes, Outs, etc.:** There are no strikes, balls, outs, bunting, stealing, leading or infield fly outs. Each half inning ends after the last batter has batted. The goal is to prevent a run from scoring.
- e) **No Throwing Bats** – To learn how not to throw the bat after hitting a ball, the batter shall be instructed to drop the bat in a arrow/triangle painted at the start of the 1st base foul line.
- f) **Holding Bats:** Only the batter and next batter are allowed to hold bats. The next batter can only hold and swing a bat when inside the batting circle (on-deck). A parent should be stationed near the batting circle to monitor bat use.
- g) **A Batted Ball that hits a Defensive Coach** – is in-play unless the balls goes out of bounds.
- h) **Baserunners:**
 - i) Bases should be loaded before each at bat.
 - ii) At the start of the inning we suggest the last three players to bat in that half inning be placed on the bases in order of when they will bat starting at 3rd base and working back to 1st base.
 - iii) Coaches should be coaching at 1st and 3rd base and advise the player when to run and when not to run. The players should be taught basic base running signals (run to the next base, stay at the current base).

3) Defense:

- a) **Plays are only made at home plate:** Every contact that passes the in-play line shall result in players running the bases. All defensive plays are made only at home plate to a coach-catcher of the defensive team. For balls hit into the outfield, we suggest that as the season progresses the coaches teach the players to make a relay throw either to the pitcher for balls hit in the near outfield or the 2nd baseman for balls hit deep in the outfield.
- b) **A run does not occur:**
 - i) When the throw from the fielder beats the baserunner from 3rd base to the coach-catcher (while the coach is standing with at least one foot anywhere inside the in-play area in front of home plate) and
 - ii) If a fielder catches a batted ball before the ball touches the ground.

In both instances the run is not counted (it can be called an “out” but outs have no consequence).
- c) **Defensive Positions:**
 - i) Catcher is a played by a Coach from the defensive team.

- ii) All other positions are taken by the players: 5 Infield positions (1st, 2nd, shortstop, 3rd and Pitcher) and 5 outfield positions (left, left-center, center, right-center and right). Place the infielders in their normal pre-play position (not on the bases but near them).
- iii) Infielders must stay in the infield; outfielders must stay in the outfield (it is the job of the defensive coaches to enforce this rule and to advise the outfielders where to throw the ball).
- iv) Each game, all players should get a chance to play different defensive positions (especially allowing each player to play infield and outfield positions during each game).

d) **Defensive Playing Time:** No player should sit out two consecutive innings.

Once a ball is put into play, the excitement and motion of fielders and runners make it difficult for an athlete at this age to understand where to throw the ball, especially if the rules allow for outs at any of the four bases. Oftentimes baseball at this age turns into amoeba-ball, with every player chasing the ball no matter where it is hit.

On defense, these rules emphasize the importance of positioning and of working together as a team to get the ball back to the catcher.

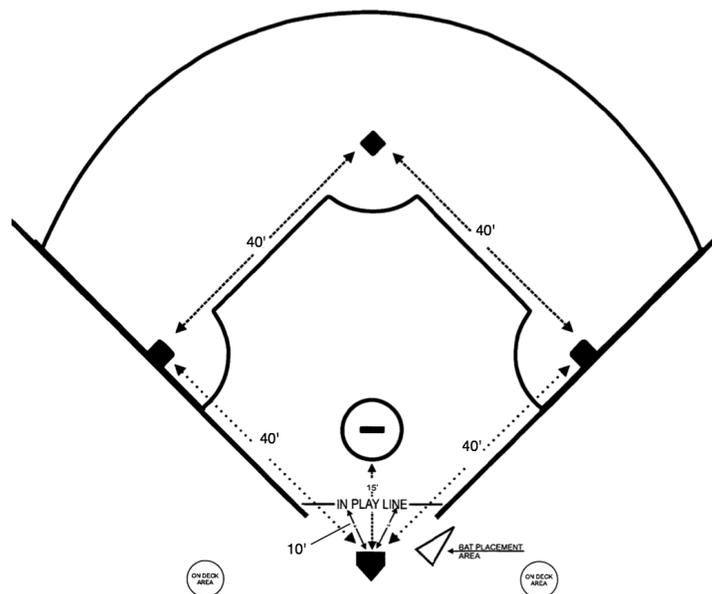
On offense, batters will experience far more confidence-building success than with coach pitching. Players will also learn the basic baseball skill of picking up base coaches as they round the bases (and learning base running signs), something that is also a challenge for older players.

By simplifying the rules, we maximize the number of players involved, give young children a chance to play naturally and to enjoy practicing the skills they are learning, to build their confidence, and to have fun!

SET-UP

Field Set-Up:

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



Offense Setup:

As soon as players come off the field to bat:

- a. All players should put on their batting helmets,
- b. The first three batters (batter, on-deck in the batting circle and in the hole) should be identified.
- c. The first three base runners should be identified and placed on the bases. We recommend they be the last scheduled to bat in that half inning.

Coaches & Parents:

Head Coach: Prior to the game set the offensive and defensive lineups and manage the general play of the game and his/her coaches.

Bench Coach

On Offense

- (i) Position and coaching the batter, if necessary
- (ii) Make sure all batters and runners are wearing their batting helmets
- (iii) Fill the empty bases with runners,
- (iv) Keep track of the batting order,
- (v) Remind the batter NOT TO THROW THE BAT but to place it on the arrow/triangle on the ground that points 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 should get assistance from parents to help with any of the above, especially with getting them to put on their batting helmets and readying them to become runners on base.

On Defense

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.

Other Two Coaches:

On Offense:

1st & 3rd Base Coaches

- Confirm that every base runner is wearing a batting helmet before each at-bat.
- Help the runners know when to run and when to hold. (Simple signs should be taught to the players that indicate to go to the next base or stop at the base.)

Defense Setup:

- a) The catcher/coach is responsible for
 - Moving the batting Tee away after each batter hits and repositioning it and the ball on the Tee for the next batter.
 - After a ball is hit into play, making sure the batter places the bat 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 on it.
 - Standing in the in-play area raising his/her hands in the air and calling for the ball (“throw home”) once the ball is in play. This coach should take care not to be in the way of the runner by blocking home plate or the base line.
- b) Two coaches in the outfield (left and right fields) are responsible for defensive positioning, enforcing the rule that infielders must stay in the infield and outfielders stay in the outfield, and telling them where to throw the ball.

Parents:

- a. **Offense:** Watch the players to make sure that only the batter and the player in the on-deck circle are holding bats; to help a coach who may request parental assistance (such as getting the players to put their batting helmets on and standing by the batting circle to help prevent inappropriate bat swinging)
- b. **Defense:** Back up the catcher in case of errant throws or passed balls.

Umpires: 1 umpire per game

An important part of this experience includes involving the parents to support the coaches and players. Community-building is one of our key goals.

SCORING

- The umpire shall keep score.
- The umpire shall stop the runners by blowing the whistle when the ball has been thrown towards the coach-catcher, whether from an infielder or outfielder. Before blowing the whistle, the umpire should determine if there is an attempt to relay the ball home. In that case, the umpire should allow the play to continue until the final throw is made. If the ball is thrown over the catcher-coaches’ 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(s) to which they were going at the time the whistle is blown. This is a discretionary ruling that cannot be challenged.
- The umpire has the discretion to determine which base a runner has acquired depending on whether that runner was at least halfway down the line when the whistle was blown.
- If an outfield coach is struck by a batted ball, the play should continue, the play is still live.

POST-GAME HANDSAKE 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 when they should shake the hands of their coaches saying “thank you coach.”

UMPIRE'S RESPONSIBILITIES

- Keep score and inform the teams the number of runs scored after each half inning.
- Make sure that batting helmets are worn by all batters and baserunners.
- Make sure the catcher-coach is clearing the Batting Tee from home plate after a ball is hit and having the batter place the bat in the triangle after hitting the ball.
- If the ball does not cross the 10' line in front of home plate, stop play and return the batter to hit.
- Stop the runners by blowing the whistle when the ball has been thrown back towards 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.
- 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 respect, good sportsmanship, and appreciation. Play Ball!

HOTLINE FOR CANCELLATION INFORMATION

(If there is no message, the policy is to come to the field for a game)

877 407-7878

CODE OF CONDUCT

Successfully completing a background check is a prerequisite to coaching. Except in the case of injury, touching of players by coaches can only be above the waist (pat on the should, back, or head). In case of injury, the parent or guardian responsible for that player should be contacted and should take control of the situation.

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, negative rooting 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.

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

GAME BATTING ORDER & FIELD POSITIONS

TEAM: _____ COACH: _____ DATE: _____

| PLAYERS | | INNINGS | | | | | | | | | |
|---------|------|---------|-------|-----|-------|-----|-------|-----|-------|-----|-------|
| Shirt # | NAME | 1 | | 2 | | 3 | | 4 | | 5 | |
| | | BAT | FIELD | BAT | FIELD | BAT | FIELD | BAT | FIELD | BAT | FIELD |
| 1 | | 1 | | | | | | | | | |
| 2 | | 2 | | 1 | | | | | | | |
| 3 | | 3 | | 2 | | 1 | | | | | |
| 4 | | | | 3 | | 2 | | 1 | | | |
| 5 | | | | | | 3 | | 2 | | 1 | |
| 6 | | | | | | | | 3 | | 2 | |
| 7 | | | | | | | | | | 3 | |
| 8 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 9 | | | | | | | | | | | |
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| # | | | | | | | | | | | |
| # | | | | | | | | | | | |
| # | | | | | | | | | | | |

Recommended Approach to Batting Order:

Start each batting half inning with the 1st batter in the batting slot noted above and use the last three as the first to be placed on the bases.

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

EXAMPLE

78th PRECINCT YOUTH COUNCIL - PEE WEES

GAME BATTING ORDER & FIELD POSITIONS

| | | | | | |
|--------------|------------------|---------------|--------------|--------------|---------------|
| TEAM: | <u>RED BIRDS</u> | COACH: | <u>SMITH</u> | DATE: | <u>4/7/18</u> |
|--------------|------------------|---------------|--------------|--------------|---------------|

| PLAYERS | | INNINGS | | | | | | | | | |
|---------|--------|---------|-------|-----|-------|-----|-------|-----|-------|-----|-------|
| Shirt # | NAME | 1 | | 2 | | 3 | | 4 | | 5 | |
| | | BAT | FIELD | BAT | FIELD | BAT | FIELD | BAT | FIELD | BAT | FIELD |
| 3 | PETER | 1 | 1st | 15 | 2nd | 14 | sit | 13 | LF | 12 | sit |
| 5 | BILLY | 2 | 3rd | 1 | CF | 15 | 2nd | 14 | sit | 13 | LF |
| 4 | JOEY | 3 | 2nd | 2 | sit | 1 | LF | 15 | sit | 14 | P |
| 6 | SAM | 4 | sit | 3 | 3rd | 2 | 1st | 1 | CF | 15 | LCF |
| 9 | HARRY | 5 | SS | 4 | sit | 3 | LCF | 2 | sit | 1 | 1st |
| 10 | WILL | 6 | sit | 5 | SS | 4 | RCF | 3 | sit | 2 | 2nd |
| 12 | MARY | 7 | LF | 6 | sit | 5 | P | 4 | SS | 3 | sit |
| 13 | JOSHUA | 8 | LCF | 7 | sit | 6 | SS | 5 | 1st | 4 | CF |
| 14 | EZKIEL | 9 | sit | 8 | 1st | 7 | 3rd | 6 | LCF | 5 | sit |
| 1 | JANE | 10 | RCF | 9 | sit | 8 | RF | 7 | sit | 6 | SS |
| 2 | BEN | 11 | sit | 10 | LF | 9 | CF | 8 | 2nd | 7 | RF |
| 8 | RONNIE | 12 | RF | 11 | LCF | 10 | sit | 9 | 3rd | 8 | sit |
| 7 | MARIA | 13 | P | 12 | RCF | 11 | sit | 10 | RCF | 9 | sit |
| 15 | FRITZ | 14 | CF | 13 | P | 12 | sit | 11 | RF | 10 | 3rd |
| 11 | JAMES | 15 | sit | 14 | RF | 13 | sit | 12 | P | 11 | RCF |

Recommended Approach to Batting Order:

Start each batting half inning with the 1st batter in the batting slot noted above and use the last three as the first to be placed on the bases.

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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