



Western North Carolina Babe Ruth League

RULES FOR DISTRICT / AREA / STATE TOURNAMENTS

7-YEAR-OLD ROOKIE DIVISION (Baseball)

1. **Age:** 7 years old & under (must have been registered with Babe Ruth League, Inc.). Players cannot turn 8 years old before May 1 of the tournament year.

2. **Player Roster:** 12 to 15 player rosters with 10 players batting in order [11 with Extra Player (EP)]. Must have 9 players to start and finish a game (Rule 4.16)

The EP can be used as an 11th batter. If a team elects this option, it must start with the EP and end with the EP or forfeit the game. **NOTE:** It is not required that both teams use this option. All other rostered players will follow normal substitution rules per Babe Ruth Rule Book.

There will be four outfielders. ALL outfielders must remain in the outfield (cannot be initially positioned in the infield at any time).

The player that assumes the pitcher's position must remain within the "mound" (5-foot-radius half circle), behind the machine, or on one side or the other until the ball is hit. If the pitcher violates any of these requirements, then (1) The play will stand, even if the pitcher is involved in the play, and (2) The umpire(s) will warn the violating pitcher's manager that if that same pitcher violates one or both requirements again, he or she will have to be removed from the pitcher's position. The player can assume another position but cannot re-enter as a pitcher in that game. The player may not be ejected from the game for this infraction. **NOTE:** The Pitcher position is only a reference to a "Fielder's" position (does not deliver a pitch). Therefore, there is NO "Number of Pitches Delivered" rule for the player in the position. A "courtesy runner" is not allowed for the pitcher.

The catcher takes the catcher's normal position in full gear.

3. **15-Run-Rule:** A regulation 15-run-rule game shall be declared by the plate umpire if one team is ahead by 15 or more runs at the end of three complete innings (two and a half innings if the home team is ahead by 15 or more runs).

4. **10-Run Rule:** A regulation 10-run-rule game shall be declared by the plate umpire if one team is ahead by 10 or more runs at the end of four (or five) complete innings (three and a half (or four and a half) innings if the home team is ahead by 10 or more runs).

5. **Field dimensions:** Standard Cal Ripken Division base length of 60 feet.

6. **Courtesy Runner:** Catchers may have courtesy runners run for them every time that they reach base. Each courtesy runner used must be a player who is not in the team's current lineup. A player may only be a courtesy runner once per inning.
7. **Infield Fly Rule:** There is NO INFIELD FLY RULE.
8. **Game Length:** Six innings or no new inning can begin after one and a half hours, whichever comes first; however, we will finish the inning and no tie games are allowed, the game must continue until there is a winner. In Championship Games, there is No Time Limit.
9. **Batter:** Each batter receives a maximum of four pitches. If the batter strikes out (on or before the fourth pitch), or if the ball has not been hit into play after four pitches, the batter is out.
 - If the batter fouls the fourth pitch, batter will receive pitches as long as batter continues to foul pitches. **NOTE:** Any pitch bunted foul after two strikes is a third strike and the batter is out.
 - There are no bases on balls in machine-pitch Rookies.
 - The batter will be awarded first base if he is touched by a pitched ball which he/she is not attempting to hit unless (1) the ball is in the strike zone when it touches the batter, or (2) the batter makes no attempt to avoid being touched by the ball. If the ball is in the strike zone when it touches the batter, it shall be called a strike, whether the batter tries to avoid the ball (Rule 6.08b).

10. **Pitching machine:**

A spring-loaded Portable Pitching Machine (Black or Blue Flame) will be used for all District, Area, and State Tournaments for WNC Babe Ruth League.

The pitching machine is placed at 46 feet from home base (the rear point of home plate) with the spring setting on the foot pedal as #9. All other settings will be adjusted by the umpire to achieve the flattest pitch possible. Coaches are not allowed to check the machine before their team bats. Only umpires may decide if adjustments should be made.

11. **Umpires:**

There will be two umpires. One umpire is behind the plate and the other umpire will feed the machine. The machine should be checked prior to batting. Only the umpire may make any adjustments during play.

Either umpire can declare "no pitch" if the umpire judges that the pitch is not reasonably hittable. This is a judgement call and thus not subject to protest. This judgment can be declared at any point. If the batter swings at such a pitch before a "no pitch" is called and in the umpire's judgement the pitch was unhittable the umpire can call a no pitch. If the ball is hit and the umpire has called a no pitch the no pitch call will stand.

12. **Dead Ball:**

The ball will be declared dead when the defensive team stops the lead runner, or the runner abandons the effort to advance. There are no halfway lines between the bases, trailing runners will be sent back to the last base touched when the umpire has called time. Runners either make the bag or they don't. If a coach is trying to have their runner(s) "dance" around the base to draw a throw, this is **NOT** considered trying to advance.

If a fair ball hits any part of the pitching machine without touching any defensive player first, the ball is dead, and the batter will be awarded first base. All other runners will return to the base that they occupied before the ball was hit **unless forced** to advance because of the batter being awarded first base (Rules 5.09f and 7.04a). If a fair ball is first touched by a defensive player and then hits any part of the pitching machine, it is a live ball.

If a fair ball touches an umpire in fair territory before it touches an infielder (including the pitcher) or touches an umpire before it has passed an infielder other than the pitcher, the ball is dead, and the batter will be awarded first base. All other runners will return to the base that they occupied before the ball was hit **unless forced** to advance because of the batter being awarded first base (Rules 5.09f and 7.04a).

A thrown ball that hits any part of the pitching machine is a live ball.

13. **Bunting:** Bunting is **NOT** allowed. **NOTE:** Fake bunting (slashing) is not allowed. **PENALTY –** The batter is out, the ball is dead, and no runners may advance.

14. **Base Stealing:** Base stealing is not permitted. Runner(s) leaving their base(s) before the batter hits the ball or before the ball reaches home plate shall be regulated by the Cal Ripken 60 Ft. Baseball Special Base Running Rule found in the current edition of the Babe Ruth League Baseball rule book. The runner(s) will not be called out.

15. **Appeals:** Appeals in accordance with Rule 7.10 that a base runner has failed to touch a required base can be made when the ball is dead.

Protests: If you protest a call during the game, this game will stop and not resume until that protest is resolved with the protest committee and NC State Commissioners. Once the ruling is received back from the protest committee and NC State Commissioners, there answer is final. We do not play "under" protest.

Unless addressed here within, play shall be by current edition of the Babe Ruth League Baseball rule book.

Approved by WNCBR May 2021.