



Weston Athletic League (WAL) BABE RUTH / CAL RIPKEN Rules, 2026

1. Cal Ripken / Babe Ruth Rules shall be used at all times, except in any circumstances when said rules are in direct conflict with these posted Weston Athletic League (WAL) Baseball Rules. In such case, WAL Rules shall supersede Cal Ripken / Babe Ruth Rules.

2. Time Limit/Game Length/Playoffs – The Home Team Scorekeeper shall record the official start time in the scorebook per the umpire’s watch or game clock. No new inning shall begin after the time limit has passed. The official start time will be declared by the Home Plate Umpire, and shall be announced to both managers and recorded in the official scorebook. If a game is suspended for weather, then the same procedure shall be used. 6 innings maximum for all divisions except Babe Ruth (7 innings). All divisions will have a double elimination playoff tournament. Undefeated team in championship game must lose twice to be eliminated.

Time between half-innings: For all divisions except T-ball, play must begin within 3 minutes of the prior half-inning ending. The umpires will enforce this rule. Pitchers have a maximum of 8 warmup pitches in the 1st inning, or anytime a new pitcher takes the mound. 5 warmup pitches are allowed for pitchers remaining in the game.

Time Limits:

- Babe Ruth 2 hours
- Majors 1 hour 45 min
- Minors 1 hour 45 min
- Rookie 1 hour 30 min
- T Ball 1 hour

No time limits for championship games except for T-ball. See T-ball Rules.

For the playoffs, if a game is tied after the time or innings limit and a new inning must start, the last batted out from the previous inning will be placed on 2nd base with no outs (MLB extra innings rule).

3. The Official Scorebook shall be maintained by the home team. The official scorebook must be kept in writing or on GameChanger. Pitch/inning count sheets shall be kept by each team; the official pitch/inning count is the responsibility of the visiting team. The official pitch/inning count will be kept in writing using a WAL pitch/inning count form or in GameChanger. Both teams shall compare the score and pitch counts at the end of each inning. Any discrepancy shall be resolved before starting a new inning.

4. Umpires:

- Any protest situation must be resolved before continuation of play. The Plate Umpire shall be informed of nature of protest and the



Division Commissioner. **Only Rules Questions or Rule Application may be protested.** Judgment calls can never be protested. Game time will be suspended during a protest.

- Protested games shall be referred to Division's Commissioner and the Protest Committee within 24 hours.
- Addressing the umpires: only the Manager or coach who represents his team at the plate meeting prior to the start of the game may address the umpires during a game. This includes the Manager, who may not address the umpires unless he personally attends the plate meeting.

5. Mercy Rule - The game will end via 10 run mercy rules when one team leads by 10 or more runs at the end of 4 innings or later, or 3½ innings if the home team is ahead. The team that is behind must complete at least 4 full innings at bat. If the visiting team takes a 10+ run lead in the top of the 4th, 5th, or 6th inning the home team shall have the opportunity to finish the inning. The game will end immediately if the home team takes a 10-run lead in the 4th, 5th, or 6th inning. (There is no Mercy rule for T-Ball.)

6. Games halted by weather will be considered complete regulation games if at least:

- 3 ½ innings complete if home team ahead (Visitors must bat 4 times)
- 4 innings complete if the home team is behind (Both team have batted 4 times).
- All halted regular season games shall be considered suspended games unless they are considered completed games per above.
- All halted playoff games shall be considered suspended games and shall be played out until time limit or inning limit has been reached.
- Rules for Suspended Games shall apply



All pitch/inning counts in a suspended game shall be recorded; appropriate requirements shall be followed as if the game was a regular game.

7. Batting Order:

- Babe Ruth & Major Divisions: Each team will use a continuous batting order. Teams may play with 8 players in the lineup. There is no automatic out for the 9th position in the order for a team that only has 8 players. Teams cannot play with fewer than 8 players.
- Minors and below Divisions: Each player attending the game will bat in a continuous order. Players that arrive late will be added to the end of the batting order. A speed-up runner may be used for the catcher---who will always be the last batted out. (see rule 13). Minors and Rookie Divisions can play with 8 players without a penalty/automatic out but cannot play with fewer than 8 players. There is no minimum number of players for T-Ball.

8. Minimum play rules:

- Babe Ruth: Each player must play two defensive innings (not necessarily consecutive). Failure to meet these minimums is cause for protest. Innings played for the purpose of this rule must be the entire inning. (Exception: games shortened due to weather or games that do not reach 4 innings).
- Majors: Each player at the game must play 6 consecutive outs in the field, and bat at least once. Failure to meet these minimums is cause for protest. Innings played for the purpose of this rule must be for the entire inning.(Exception: games shortened due to weather or games that do not reach 4 innings). If a team chooses to use a continuous batting order, then each player must play two defensive innings (not necessarily consecutive).



- **Minors**: Each player must play two defensive innings (not necessarily consecutive). Each player must play at least one defensive inning in the infield, to include Catcher. Innings played for the purpose of this rule must be for the entire inning.
- **Rookie**: Each player must play two defensive innings (not necessarily consecutive innings). Innings played for the purpose of this rule must be for the entire inning. Each player must play at least one defensive inning in the infield, to include Catcher. A player may play a maximum of 2 innings at 1B and a maximum of 2 innings at Pitcher. For the purpose of this rule a player that plays 1B or Pitcher for one pitch will be considered to have played the entire inning.
- **T-Ball**: Each player must play a minimum of one out of every 3 innings in the infield. An individual player may play a maximum of one inning at 1B and one inning as Pitcher. For the purpose of this rule a player that plays 1B or Pitcher for one pitch will be considered to have played the entire inning.

9. Pitching Rules:

Pitchers are limited to pitch counts for each game, and must observe the required days of rest per the following:

- Babe Ruth: 85 pitches per game; 65 for league age 13 year olds.
- Majors: 75 pitches per game
- Minors: 50 pitches per game for league age 8 year old.
65 pitches per game for league age 9 & 10 yr olds.

Required rest:

- 1-20 pitches 0 days rest
- 21-35 pitches 1 day rest
- 36-50 pitches 2 days rest
- 51-65 pitches 3 days rest
- 66+ pitches 4 days rest



- Any pitches thrown in Eagles games will count the same as WAL games, and therefore require the same rest.
- Should a pitcher reach the maximum during a player at bat, the pitcher is allowed to continue pitching to this batter until his at bat is complete. The official pitch count for rest purposes is based on the number of pitches thrown before starting the last batter faced.
- Pitch count does NOT include pre-game warm-ups or warm-up pitches between innings.
- All pitches/innings pitched in travel games WILL count toward a pitcher's pitch limit and require required days rest.
- A starting pitcher that throws more than 40 pitches in any game, and is removed from the mound, cannot return to the position of pitcher in that game. Any other pitcher in the game, once removed from the mound, cannot pitch again in that game.
- Days rest must be complete days off. For example, 50 pitches on Saturday require 2 complete days of rest (Sunday and Monday).

10. Butcher Boy/Slash bunting is not allowed in any age group. Butcher boy is when the batter makes a fake attempt to bunt and then swings at the pitch. If a batter attempts to Slash bunt, the batter is out, and ball/play is dead. (see Rule Book, page 21)

11. Avoiding Contact: Players must avoid contact when approaching a base if there is a legitimate attempt for a defensive player to make a play on the runner. If a runner does not slide he must attempt to avoid contact; if there is contact, and the runner did not attempt to avoid contact, the runner will be called out and the play is dead. If the runner makes intentional or malicious contact with a defensive player, it is an automatic out and the runner shall be ejected from the game. If a team does not have a substitute for an ejected player, that position in the batting order will be an automatic out every time the ejected player is scheduled to bat for the remainder of the game. As a minimum, an ejected player will be automatically suspended for the next game.



12. Sliding:

- Babe Ruth/Majors: Head first slides are permitted into any base except home. Head first slides into a home will result in runner being called out and ball/play is dead.
- Minors and below: Head first slides are not allowed into any base, except when diving back to a base to avoid a tag/pick-off play. Runners that slide head first will be called out.

13. Courtesy and Speed Up Runners:

- **Courtesy Runners:**
 - Majors: Courtesy runners are allowed, once for each player during the game; A courtesy runner may only be used one time per inning. The runner must be a player that is not in the lineup. If a team has exhausted all courtesy runners, a speed up runner may be used.
 - Courtesy runners cannot be used if a team has no substitutes.
 - For Majors teams opting for a continuous batting order, there are no courtesy runners; a speed-up runner may be used for the pitcher or catcher, which shall be the last batted out.
 - For Babe Ruth teams with a continuous batting order, there are no courtesy runners; a speed-up runner may be used for the pitcher or catcher, which shall be the last batted out.
- **Speed up Runners:**
 - Babe Ruth/Majors/Minors/Rookie: If a team has no substitutes, courtesy runners cannot be used; however, a speed up runner for the pitcher or catcher may be used at any time. If used, the speed-up runner shall be the last batted out.
 - If a speed up runner is used in the first inning, and there are no outs, the runner will be the last batter in the lineup.



14. Players leaving a game:

- Rookie and Above: If a player is forced to leave the game as a result of injury or illness (in the judgment of the umpire) which occurs during the game, the player may be removed from the game and his/her position in the batting order shall be skipped without penalty or an out being declared. Such a player will not be allowed to re-enter the game.
- Rookie and Above: If a player is leaving the game for reason other than injury or illness, an out shall be declared each time that player's turn in the batting order arrives, unless a substitute is available.
- Majors: A team's batting order must consist of at least 9 players. If after an injury a team has only 8 batters, the team shall be required to take an out in the spot of the 9th player who left the order. In the event a team has less than 8 fielders, the team shall be required to forfeit the game.
- Babe Ruth, Minors and Rookie Divisions can play with 8 players, without penalty.

15. Catchers must have proper catcher's equipment (including protective cup and a throat guard) and must use a catcher's mitt (except Rookie and T-Ball). Catchers must wear a protective helmet that covers their ears. All helmets must include a throat guard. Catcher is a required position in every division, including T-Ball. The Rookie catcher shall take a proper position in the Catcher's Box while the pitch is being delivered. T-Ball catchers should stand well clear of the batter until the ball is in play. T-Ball catchers are required to wear a mask, but other protective equipment is optional.

16. Regular season games can end in a tie. There must be a winner for all playoff games. Playoff games that are tied at the end of regulation shall continue into extra innings until a team wins the game.

17. Any player bleeding during a game shall be removed until the bleeding has stopped, and a bandage applied. This player is considered injured until the bleeding has stopped.



18. Players must remain in the dugout during games. Exception: Trips to bathroom or water fountain. No player should be sitting in the stands.

19. All players on a team shall wear uniforms identical in color, team name and style per the Babe Ruth Rule Book. Players not in uniform WILL NOT be allowed to participate in the game. Players must have shirts tucked in always during games. Pool players will wear the uniform of their own team. Babe Ruth/Majo/Minor Divisions: A Protective cup is required and part of the uniform for safety. A mouth guard is optional.

20. No metal cleats for players in the Majors division or below. Metal cleats are allowed in the Babe Ruth Division.

21. Only 4 coaches are allowed on the field at one time. All coaches must complete background checks and must be approved by WAL. All coaches must be in uniform, shirt & hat. Managers and coaches are permitted to coach 1st and 3rd base. Players are also allowed to coach bases (Babe Ruth/Majors divisions only). Players must wear a helmet when coaching a base.

22. All Batters must wear a helmet at all times when batting, on base or on deck. On deck batters are permitted in the on-deck circle for the Babe Ruth, Majors and Minors. On Deck Batters must be in the batting circle behind the batter (1st Base side for left-handed batters/3B side for right handed batters.). There are no on deck batters for the Rookie Division and below (THIS IS A SAFETY ISSUE).

23. Babe Ruth/ Majors only: A dropped third strike by the catcher is a live ball according to Cal Ripken/Babe Ruth Rule 6.09(b). For the Minors and Rookie Divisions batters, may not advance on a dropped 3rd strike.

24. Coaches may warm up pitchers. Players warming up pitchers (on or off the field) must wear a cup and catcher's mask, with throat guard.

25. Balks/Illegal Pitches:



- Balks will be called in every game (Majors and Babe Ruth). The first balk by a pitcher will receive a warning until spring break for Babe Ruth, and through the end of the regular season for Majors.
- For Minors and Rookie Divisions: there are no balks because runners cannot lead until the pitch reaches the plate. Illegal pitches can be called. Illegal pitches will be called a ball on the batter.

26. Rules for regular season suspended games:

- All weather delayed or otherwise suspended games which have not reached required regulation length will be continued from the point the game was suspended.
- Time limitations imposed on the original game will be continued from the point the game was suspended.
- All players in attendance at the time the game resumes will be allowed to play. If a rostered player was not in the lineup at the time the game was suspended, but is in attendance at the time the game is resumed, he/she shall be added to the bottom of the lineup.
- If a player in the lineup at the time the game was suspended is not available at the time the game is resumed, he/she shall be removed from the lineup without penalty. That player's spot in the batting order shall be skipped with no out declared.
- If the missing player was on base at the time the game was suspended, he/she shall be replaced by the player(s) present who made the last batted out(s) in batting order.
- Pitching limitations for the game shall be enforced from the beginning of the game as originally played. However weekly pitching limitations shall be reset to the current week. Both game and weekly pitching limitations, including required rest times, shall apply.

27. Bat Rules: Majors and below divisions will follow all Babe Ruth/Cal Ripken bat rules. USA Baseball approved bats must be used. For the Babe Ruth Division only: bat rules are amended as follows: All players league age 14 and 15 must use BBCOR (.5)



certified bats, or a wood bat. All players league age 16 and above must use wood bats.

Managers are responsible for ensuring that only legal bats are used in a game. It is an automatic out if a player enters the batter's box with an illegal bat. Managers/teams cited multiple times for using illegal bats are subject to a 1 game suspension, or more. This rule is for bats that are unauthorized and not for a bat that might be dented, cracked or are in some other way damaged. In those situations the umpire may require the bat to be removed from the game. There is no penalty in those situations.

28. Run Limits:

- There is an 8 run limit for Babe Ruth games. Unlimited runs can be scored in the 6th inning and beyond.
- There is an 8 run limit for Majors. Unlimited runs can be scored in the 6th inning.
- For Rookie and Minors: a maximum of 5 runs can be scored in each half inning. An inning ends when a team scores 5 runs, or if the opposing team gets 3 outs---whichever comes first. In the 6th inning there is no run limit.
- Home teams will occupy the 1B dug out; Visiting teams occupy the 3B dug out.

29. Pool Players: A Manager should request a pool player if he believes he might not be able to field a team.

- Requests should be made to the Division's Commissioner.
- Pool players will come from the Division below (i.e. Majors teams will receive a pool player from the Minors Division).
- Requests should be made at least 24 hours in advance.
- Pool players assigned will wear their own team's uniform.
- Pool players once assigned, must play the entire game---on both offense and defense. Pool players that are assigned and arrive at the game must play. Failure to play a pool player for the entire game will result in a forfeit.
- Pool players cannot play the position of pitcher.



30. Field Dimensions:

Babe Ruth: 60/90.

Majors: 50/70

Minors/Rookie: 46/60.

T-Ball: 60 foot bases.

31. For Rookie Division:

- Pitching Line- There shall be a line drawn forty (40) feet from the apex of home plate to establish the minimum forward point for the pitching coach
- The pitching coach is to stand behind the marked pitching line or keep one foot, or knee on the line when engaging the pitch.
- The pitching coach can pitch anywhere along the pitching line from 40 feet to 42 feet of the pitching circle.
- The pitching coach, either standing or from the knee, shall deliver the pitch overhand and at a velocity that creates a flat pitch to the batter
NOTE: No lobbing or underhand pitches.
- The pitching coach shall not verbally or physically coach while in the pitching position. If they do, they will be removed as a pitching coach for the remainder of the game, but not from the game. No warnings.
- The pitching coach shall position himself as not to be an obstruction to the defensive team on any possible play once the ball has been hit. If a coach violates this rule before the ball is pitched, first offense is a warning; second offense is removal of the coach as the pitcher for the remainder of the game.
- The catcher takes a normal position in full gear and returns the ball to the coach-pitcher after each pitch (live ball situations excepted).
- With 2 outs, if the catcher is on base he must be substituted for a speed-up runner, which shall be the last batted out.
- Teams must play with a catcher at all times. The catcher shall be positioned in the catcher's box when the pitch is delivered. For any play at home plate, only the catcher can cover the base and make a forced-out.



- The player that assumes the pitcher position, must wear a mask for protection. The defensive player listed as the pitcher shall not leave the pitching circle until the ball is hit, unless the batter squares around to bunt. Penalty: The play continues. After the play has ended, the offensive team has the option of taking the result of the play or the no-pitch.
- The pitcher must remain within the 5 foot pitchers circle (pitchers mound), behind the pitching coach and to one side or the other, until the ball is hit. If the pitcher violates these requirements, then 1) the play will stand, even if the pitcher is involved in the play and 2) the umpires will warn the violating pitchers' manager that if the same pitcher violates one or both requirements again, the player will be removed from the pitchers position. The player can assume another position but cannot re-enter as pitcher in that game.
- If a batted fair ball hits any part of the pitching coach without touching any defensive player, the ball is immediately dead. The batter will be awarded first base. All other runners return the base they last occupied before the ball was hit, unless forced to advance as a result of the batter being awarded first base.
- If a batted fair ball is first touched by a defensive player and then hits any part of the pitching coach, it is a live ball.
- If a thrown ball hits any part of the pitching coach, it is a live ball.
- Each batter receives a maximum of five (5) pitches. If the batter strikes out, or if the ball has not been hit into play after five pitches, the batter is out.
- No Intentional Walks: If the batter fouls the fifth (5) pitch, the batter will continue receiving pitches, until he creates an offensive play or he strikes out.
- The batter is out if he swings on a third strike and misses the ball.
- All outfielders must be on the grass; teams may play with up to 5 outfielders.
- Hit By a Pitch: If the batter is hit by a pitch from the pitching coach, the batter will not be awarded first base.



- Bunting: Bunting is allowed in all divisions. However, No fake bunting is allowed (Butcher Boy). If the batter offers to bunt, pulls the bat back and then swings at the pitch, the batter will automatically be declared out by the umpire. Any foul bunt after two strikes is an out.
- Base stealing: Base stealing is NOT permitted in coach pitch.
- For overthrows to any base, all runners may, at their risk, only advance one base. If a fielder throws to any base after the initial overthrow, and there is a subsequent overthrow, the runners may not advance any further. An overthrow is defined as a ball that goes into foul territory, or into the outfield grass. If a runner is advancing to a base and the fielder does not control the ball, but the ball does not go into foul territory or the outfield grass, the runner may not try to advance to the next base.
- 2 defensive coaches may be on the field but must be in the outfield, and in foul territory.
- Pitchers must wear a mask for protection. Pitchers must have one foot inside the pitcher's circle when the ball is pitched and cannot be more than one foot in front of the pitching machine.
- Teams must play with a catcher at all times. The catcher shall be positioned in the catcher's box when the pitch is delivered. For any play at home plate, only the catcher can cover the base and make a put-out.
- When a batter puts a ball in play, once an infielder controls the ball in the infield (cannot be standing in the outfield), runners may continue advancing to the base they are attempting to reach at their risk. If an infielder continues to control the ball in the infield once runners have reached the base they were advancing to, the runners must stop. If the infielder attempts a throw, and there is an overthrow, see the rule above regarding overthrows. Defensive players cannot call time out to stop play.
- Between innings, the offensive coach gets a maximum of 3 warmup pitches to test the pitching machine.



32. For T-Ball Division:

- Players may not advance on an overthrow.
- No on deck batters and no bats in the dugout.
- For a ball hit to the outfield, play stops when the ball is returned to the infield, and is controlled by an infielder.
- Offensive team: an offensive inning will be complete when the defensive team records 3 outs, OR the entire offensive team bats one time, regardless of how many outs the defensive team makes. (note: each team will bat around their order. If one team has fewer players, then that team will be allowed to continue batting until they have the same number of batters as the team with more players; in that situation the next inning starts with the batter who is next in the order, not with the first batter in the lineup).
- Five outfielders are allowed on defense, but they must start out on the grass. Infielders must have both feet on the infield dirt before the ball is put in play.
- Two coaches are allowed on the field for the defensive team. One coach will be on the outfield grass, behind the players. One coach can be in the infield but cannot interfere with a play.
- A coach may assist a player in the batter's box but cannot line up the batter to hit the ball in a specific direction. (FOR PLAYOFFS: coaches cannot assist any batter in the batter's box)
- Regular season games will be scored, but will not be used for standings. Playoff seedings are determined randomly. Playoff games must be scored using an official scorebook. There must be a winner in all playoff games.
- The pitcher must remain in the pitcher's circle until the ball is hit. The pitcher may wear a helmet. Catchers must remain well clear of home plate until the ball is hit. Catchers must wear a mask. All teams must have a player in the catcher's position.
- Infielders and Pitchers must throw instead of running the ball to a base or home plate. If a fielder runs a ball to a base to make an out on a runner, the runner is safe---unless it is a natural baseball play. Example: ground ball to third base with the bases loaded and the third baseman tags third base.
- Playoffs will be a double elimination tournament, including championship



games. Championship game is 4 innings, or at least 1 hour, 15 minutes if 4 innings are completed sooner. Home/away team is decided by a coin flip.

33. For Minors Division:

- Once the catcher secures the ball, if runners are not stealing, they must immediately return to the base. Runners cannot run unless there is an errant throw to the pitcher or a throw to make a play on a runner. In the spirit of this rule, and the national Cal Ripken rule stating that a runner may not leave a base until the ball crosses home plate.
- On a walk, batters may not attempt to go to 2nd base unless there is an errant throw to the pitcher or a throw is made on the runner.
- After a pitch, runners must immediately return to their bases once the catcher secures the ball if they are not actively trying to steal the next base. Runners cannot stand off the base trying to bait catchers or pitchers to throw the ball.
- Once an infielder possesses the ball and the runners have stopped trying to advance, runners must return to their bases and cannot try to advance on a throw back to the pitcher unless throw is errant.

34. Offensive time outs: only one per inning in all Divisions, except T-Ball.

35. Protest Committee: The Protest Committee will resolve any disputes involving games that are protested. The Protest Committee will include: WAL's President; Vice President of Baseball; Commissioner of the Division. If the Division or game in question involves one of the three standing members of the Protest Committee, that person shall recuse themselves, and the President shall appoint another WAL Board member. Protests should be resolved in 72 hours.

36. Disciplinary Committee: The Disciplinary Committee includes: A Board Member designated by the President; the Vice President of Baseball; the Player agent; and Commissioner of the appropriate Division. If possible, disciplinary action involves a team, coach or fan related to one of the committee members, that member shall recuse themselves; in that



case, the President shall name another member of the Board to replace that member.

Players, Coaches, Parents or fans ejected from a game shall automatically be suspended for the team's next game. Additional disciplinary action is at the discretion of the Disciplinary Committee.