



**Willamette Valley Babe Ruth  
General Playing Rules**

# National Rule Changes

The International Board of Directors has approved the following rule changes beginning with the 2024 season. These changes will be reflected in the 2024 Babe Ruth League, Inc. Rules and Regulations.

## Part 1 – Rules modified to meet the standards of the Safe Sports Act

1. **Rule 0.01, Paragraph 7 – Background Checks (Cal Ripken Baseball, Babe Ruth Baseball, Babe Ruth Softball)** - Once a volunteer has successfully completed and passed background screening, it is valid for a two (2) year period.
2. **Rule 0.04 – Paragraph 5 (Cal Ripken Baseball, Babe Ruth Baseball, Babe Ruth Softball)** – Babe Ruth League, Inc. rostered managers and coaches in all Divisions are required to complete coaching education, a nationwide background screening, and Abuse Prevention Training in accordance with the Safe Sports Act.
3. **Rule 0.01 – Paragraph 6 – Requirement for Charter** – Leagues that use 3rd Party Insurance must show \$1,000,000 liability coverage for sexual abuse and molestation coverage.

## Part 2 – Rules changes for the 2024 season (Please note division or level of play)

1. **The Babe Ruth Baseball 13-15 Division will become the Babe Ruth Baseball 13-16 Division.** The official tournament trail for the Babe Ruth Baseball 13-16 Division and the Babe Ruth Baseball 16-18 Division will be as follows:
  - 13-Year-Old tournaments (District, State, Regional, and World Series)
  - 14-Year-Old tournaments (District, State, Regional, and World Series)
  - 13–16 Year-Old tournaments (District, State, Regional, and World Series)
  - 16-18 Year-Old tournaments (District, State, Regional, and World Series)
2. **Babe Ruth Baseball Rule 0.02**
  - 16-18 – Any player born on or after January 1, 2005, will be eligible for Babe Ruth Baseball 16-18 Division competition – Season of 2024.
3. **Babe Ruth Baseball Division - 15-Year-Old Swing Player** – This rule has been eliminated.
4. **Babe Ruth Baseball Division - 13-Year-Old Prep and 16-Year-Old Prep** – For chartering purposes, these divisions have been eliminated.
5. **Babe Ruth Baseball Division – Rule 6.10** – Any Babe Ruth 13-16 and 16-18 league may elect to use the Designated Hitter Rule.
6. **Babe Ruth Baseball Division – Rule 11.05, #12** – The Designated Hitter (DH) Rule 6.10 and Courtesy Runner Rule 3.04(a) are allowed in the 13-16 and 16-18 Division.
7. **Babe Ruth Baseball Division – Rule 11.02, #1 – Team Composition** – Each Babe Ruth 13-16 and 16-18 Division tournament team shall consist of no less than twelve (12) players and no more than eighteen (18) players, one (1) manager, and three (3) coaches.

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- Each Babe Ruth 13-16 and 16-18 tournament team may consist of any eighteen (18) players from the league or division regardless of age or position played during the local league regular season.

## **8. Cal Ripken Baseball Division, Babe Ruth Baseball Division, and Babe Ruth Softball Division – Determination of Pool Play Standings – Addition of Criterion #5 – Coin Flip**

All coin flips are governed by tournament jurisdiction as determined in Rule 11.06. If the results of the run differential with a maximum of 10 per game of the teams involved cannot break the tie, the tie is broken using a coin flip. In the event of 3 or more teams tied, a coin shall be assigned to each team. The coin landing on the opposite side as the others advances. If all coin's land on the same side, teams must re-flip. The remaining teams' tie is broken by reverting to criterion #2.

## **9. Cal Ripken Baseball Division, Babe Ruth Baseball Division, and Babe Ruth Softball Division – World Series – Important: All members of the official roster must report at their designated team report time (local time of the series) on the scheduled day of travel. Players and coaches on the official roster not arriving at the designated team report time will not be permitted to participate in the World Series without a written approved waiver from Babe Ruth League Headquarters prior to traveling to the site.**

**PENALTY:** Any player, or replacement player, manager or coach who violates this rule shall be ineligible in the current level of tournament competition.

### **Part 3 - Rule changes for the 2023 season (Please note division or level of play)**

- 1. Cal Ripken Baseball, League Age 8, 9, 10, Tournament Regulations - Rule 11.05, Paragraph 4(a)** – A pitcher shall not deliver more than 75 pitches in the same game or on the same day.
  - a. If a pitcher pitch 1-40 pitches in a game or day, no rest is required.
  - b. If a pitcher pitches 41-65 pitches in a game or day, 1 day rest required.
  - c. If a pitcher pitches 66 plus pitches in a game or day, 2 days rest required.
- 2. Cal Ripken Baseball Division, Babe Ruth Baseball Division, Babe Ruth Softball Division, Babe Ruth Buddy Ball Division** - Jewelry is permitted in all divisions of Babe Ruth League Inc. Umpires have the authority to remove anything believed to distract or increase risk to player safety. Medical alert or religious bracelets or necklaces are not considered jewelry.”

# Local Rule Changes & Additions for 2024

**Game Conduct for Non-Players/Non-Coaches** – Head Coaches are responsible for the conduct of the non-player, non-coach attendants of each game. The head umpire shall communicate with the Head Coach of each team regarding any non-player, non-coach issues, including but not limited to harassing comments, abusive language, continued badgering, etc. If the Head Coaches are unable to rectify the issue, the game should be suspended until rectified. If the issue continues, the game shall be forfeited. If it is clear to determine which non-player, non-coach is the cause of the issue, that team shall be the losing team. If it is unable to be determined, both teams will receive a loss on their record.

**Pitching Machine** – In the machine pitch Rookie Divisions, if the batter hits the ball in fair territory, and the ball hits the pitching machine, this is a dead ball, base hit, and the batter shall be awarded first base. All base runners will be awarded the next base from the original base they occupied at the beginning sequence of the dead ball.

**Slash Bunt (Cal Ripken/Babe Ruth)** – **Cal Ripken:** A batter is **not allowed** to slash bunt (Penalty: The batter will be ruled out). **Babe Ruth:** A batter is **allowed** to slash bunt in the Babe Ruth Division.

**Batting Lineup** – To start a game, a team must have a minimum of nine (9) players (batters). Teams have the option of using an Extra Player (EP) and bat 10 players or can bat their roster. The batting order, as described above, will be declared by the respective coaches at the coaches plate conference prior to the start of the game.

- **Nine Player Batting Order:** Should a team elect to bat nine players, and if a player becomes injured or gets ejected from the game, and the team cannot field 9 batters, the game shall be ruled a forfeit (BRL Rule 4.15).
- **Ten Player Batting Order (Extra Player):** Should a team elect to bat 10 players, and if a player becomes injured or gets ejected from the game, and the team cannot field 10 batters, the game shall be ruled a forfeit (BRL EP, Page 21, Rule 4.15).
- **Roster Batting Order:** Should a team elect to bat their roster, and if a player becomes injured or gets ejected from the game, the batter will be removed from the lineup and an out will be recorded each time their spot in the order comes up. Should a batting lineup drop below 10 players for purposes of a continuous batting order, only then would a game be ruled a forfeit (Local Rule, BRL Rule 4/15).

**Background Checks/Abuse Prevention Training** – each area board member, area director, head coach, assistant coach, team parent, or anyone who interacts with the team or players in a capacity beyond a mere spectator, shall be required to pass a background check and pass the Abuse Prevention Training as offered by the league. Failure to do so will result in league penalties.

# Babe Ruth League Bat Rules

"It is the policy of Babe Ruth League, Inc. to assure the safety of all participants. Accordingly, Babe Ruth League, Inc. reserves the right to ban any equipment, including bats, at any time, including during the season, based upon a change of existing policy and/or upon new information made available to Babe Ruth League, Inc."

Babe Ruth League Bat Rules
T-Ball
USA Baseball T-Ball Stamp
Cal-Ripken Baseball
USA Baseball Marking 2 5/8" Barrel Maximum NO BBCOR BATS
Babe Ruth Baseball 13-16
USA Baseball Marking or BBCOR .50 2 5/8" Barrel
Babe Ruth Baseball 16-18
All Bats Must Be BBCOR .50

*Note: Solid one-piece wood bats are permitted for use in all divisions and must conform to Rule 1.10. No laminated or experimental bats shall be used in a game.*

*Tampering or altering bats may violate certain federal and state laws and void the USA Baseball certification, as well as all manufacturer warranties. Rolling is considered tampering and would void the bat's certification and make it illegal for play.*

## NON-COMPLIANT BATS FOR - BABE RUTH BASEBALL

The NCAA recently conducted additional testing of the previously certified 33 in./30 oz. Louisville Slugger 2020 Meta (-3) BBCOR baseball bat. The conclusion of this additional testing resulted in the NCAA and the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) removing this specific model from their approved-for-play bat list. At this time, no other sizes of this bat model, or any previous model years of the bat model, have been decertified.

# Babe Ruth League Bat Rules

## PENALTY

- If the illegal bat is discovered prior to a batter completing his “at bat” the bat is simply removed from play and the at bat continues.
- A player who uses an illegal bat or non-conforming barrel dimension and hits a fair ball will be ruled out. No advancement on the bases will be allowed, and any outs during the play shall stand. This is an appeal play. The “at bat” will be considered legal once a pitch is thrown to the next batter.
- Any bat discovered prior to the game that does not conform to the above rule shall be directed to be removed immediately and not be allowed for use during the game.

If you have any questions on approved or non-compliant bats, do not hesitate to contact Babe Ruth Headquarters.

# WVBR League Pitching Rules

Division	Daily Max Pitches	Required Rest (Pitches thrown in a day)				
		0 Days	1 Day	2 Days	3 Days	4 Days
AA	60	1-25	26-40	41-50	51-60	N/A
AAA	75	1-30	31-40	41-50	51-65	66-75
Majors/Major Minor	85	1-30	31-40	41-50	51-65	66-85
Preps	95	1-35	36-45	46-56	57-69	70-95

## **Pitching Chart**

The Pitching Chart is a breakdown of how many pitches (by division) that a player can throw in any single game.

If a pitcher reaches the maximum number of pitches that they can throw in a game in the middle of a batter, the pitcher is permitted to complete throwing to the batter. Once the at bat has been completed, the pitcher must be removed from the game. **Penalty:** If a pitcher is not immediately removed from a game upon reaching their maximum pitch count for the game, the game shall be ruled as a forfeit.

## **Reporting**

Pitching Totals: The home team scorekeeper is responsible for monitoring how many pitches are thrown by pitchers from each team. The home team scorekeeper will use the league approved pitching sheet provided by their respective head coach.

- At the end of the game, the home team scorekeeper will verify the pitching totals with the visiting team scorekeeper. Once verified, the scorekeeper will sign the sheet and return it to the home team head coach.
- Should there be any discrepancies in the pitching totals between the scorekeepers, the home team's pitching totals shall be reported to the League Administrator.

Game Reports: The home team head coach is responsible for submitting the pitching report completed by their scorekeeper, and the final score of the game within 24 hours to the League Administrator.

- The home team head coach will take a picture of the Pitch Count Sheet and text or email it to the League Scheduler.
- Failure to submit the pitching and game report could result in league-imposed penalties.

# WVBR Suspended Game Policy

## **Baseball Interrupted Contest - Procedure**

The umpires, both head coaches and both scorekeepers shall gather to document the point of interruption on the lineup card and in the official scorebook (including inning, score, outs, runners on base, defensive charged conferences, etc.). The crew chief shall sign the lineup card and the official scorebook to ensure that there are two copies.

The crew chief should then give the signed lineup card to the home coach to be kept with the official scorebook.

The umpires shall send their game report to the league assigner. If a different umpire crew is assigned, the league assigner shall send the game report details to the new crew as part of accepting the assignment.

The lineup card shall be given to the new or returning umpire crew during the pre-game when the game is to be continued from the point of interruption.

## **Baseball Interrupted Contest Policy**

### 1. For darkness and/or weather

- If fewer than 3 ½ or 4 innings (Cal Ripken Division) and 4 ½ or 5 innings (Prep Division) have been played, the ***contest shall continue from the point of interruption (unless it is a non-league game, in which the game will not be made up)***.
- If 3 ½ (home team ahead) or 4 innings (Cal Ripken Division) or 4 and 1/2 (home team ahead) or 5 innings (Prep Division) have been played and the score is not tied, the contest is declared an official game.
- If play has gone beyond four (Cal Ripken Division) or five (Prep Division) full innings, teams have had an equal number of completed turns at bat and the score is tied, the contest shall continue from the point of interruption.
- If play has gone beyond four (Cal Ripken Division) or five (Prep Division) full innings and is called when the teams have not had an equal number of completed turns at bat, the score shall be the same as it was at the end of the last completed inning, unless the home team in its half of the incomplete inning, scores a run (or runs) which equals or exceeds the opponent's score, in which case, the final score shall be recorded when the game is called. If the score was tied at the end of the last completed inning, the contest shall continue from the point of interruption.
- If the game is a non-league contest, the game will be complete and will not be completed.

### 2. For other reasons, among which include light failure, sprinkler system, etc., the contest shall continue from the point of interruption unless the game is a non-league game, in which the game will be considered complete.



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**Base Runner:** While running the bases, each base runner must attempt to avoid contact with fielders. Failure to do so will result in the base runner being called out. No base runner is to be called out for running out of the baseline to avoid contact with a player fielding a ball. No fielder may occupy a baseline unless a play is “imminent”. In the event a fielder illegally occupies a baseline and hinders a runner, the umpire will make the appropriate base award. If a base runner “deliberately” contacts a fielder, the base runner will be called out and immediately ejected from the game. No warning is required. If a base runner fails to slide on a force play, and in the judgment of the umpire prevents a double play, the umpire may award the second out.

**Batter:** A batter must try to avoid interfering with a play. Batters do not necessarily have to be successful in avoiding interference for interference to be called. It is not the intent of these rules to reward a team that has poorly executed play, throws wildly, makes a wild pitch, or has a passed ball, with an out.

- If a batter shows a bunt, but in the judgment of the umpire the batter does not try to hit the ball, the umpire will call a ball or strike based on location of the pitch. Coaches may choose to advise players to pull the bat back after showing a bunt, but it is not necessary to pull the bat back to avoid a strike being called.

**Coach’s Conduct:** During games, no assistant coach, player, or parent can approach an umpire to dispute a judgment call or decision. Only a head coach may approach an umpire to discuss a rule interpretation or for clarification. At all times coaches must show respect to umpires and maintain their obligation as team leaders to provide an example of good sportsmanship for the players and other event participants. **Note: Should an assistant coach approach an umpire to dispute a call, the umpire will ask the assistant to return to his coaching box and warn the head coach that only the head coach is permitted to discuss game related matters with the umpires. Should the head coach choose to ignore the warning from the umpire, and the unsportsmanlike behavior continues; the head coach will be restricted to the dugout for the duration of the game and the assistant coach will be immediately ejected from the game. Should the adverse behavior continue from the dugout, the offending coach will be ejected from the game. Should an injury occur, the head coach will be permitted to tend to his player. Then, the head coach must immediately return to the dugout. If the head coach calls time out after being restricted to the dugout, the players must come to the dugout for instructions.**

**Cancellation of games scheduled for the Complex:** Should a game be rained out at the Complex, the makeup game, under most circumstances, will be rescheduled for the home team’s local field based on field availability. In circumstances where two teams from the same area refuse to play a previously scheduled Complex game, **a fee of \$250.00 per team will be assessed to each team.**

**Rescheduling of games:** The home team head coach shall contact the scheduler and the Umpire in Charge to reschedule the game. The Area Directors for each area shall be notified of the cancellation and rescheduled games. Any game played without following these procedures shall not count as an official game for the Cal Ripken or Babe Ruth Divisions.

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**Catchers Helmet:** Catchers in the Cal Ripken and Babe Ruth Divisions will wear a hockey style catcher's helmet. All Divisions: Any player, manager or coach warming up a pitcher on the field or in the bullpen are required to wear a protective helmet and mask,

**Dugouts:** Coaches and players must clean their dugout after each game.

**Fake Bunting:** Excessive bat wagging for fake bunting is not permitted.

- If an umpire deems bat wagging to be excessive, he shall call a strike on the batter as it will be considered as an attempt to bunt the ball.
- Should the batter pull the bat back before the pitch reaches the plate, the pitch will be judged as to whether it is a ball or a strike.
- Should bat wagging interfere with a throw on an attempted steal by a base runner, time will be called, and the batter will be called out for batter interference and the base runner(s) would have to return to the base they occupied prior to "time" being called.
- If strike three is called and the umpire judges that there was a legitimate attempt to throw the runner out, the runner will also be ruled out.
- If the umpire judges that there was not a legitimate chance to throw the runner out, the base runner(s) would have to return to the base they occupied prior to "time" being called.

**Fielders:** No fielder may occupy a baseline unless a play is "imminent".

- If a fielder illegally occupies a baseline and hinders a base runner, obstruction will be called, and the umpire will make the appropriate base award.
- If a ball is thrown inaccurately and draws a fielder into the path of a base runner, and in the judgment of the umpire there was no opportunity for an out to be made, and any contact was unintentional, the base runner shall not be called out.

**General Conduct:** No coach, player, parent, or other event participant can shout abusive or disrespectful remarks, specifically any such remarks that criticize a player, coach, or umpire's performance/judgment. All participants, league officials, coaches, umpires, and spectators enjoy their respective status at the pleasure and discretion of the League. The consequences for violating rules or applicable sportsmanship standards may be imposed by any mechanism deemed appropriate by the League. Unanimity by decision-makers is not necessary. The ultimate authority is the WVBR Sportsmanship/Competition Committee or the WVBR Executive Board, whichever is the appropriate body according to applicable rules and guidelines. Their decision as to the proper forum for hearing a grievance and on any penalty will be final.

**Infield (Home Sites only):** The home team is to take infield first and will split available time with the visiting team. Example: If the official game time is 2:00, and if the teams enter the field at

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1:30, the home team infield will take place from 1:30 - 1:40. Visiting team infield will take place from 1:40 - 1:50 with plate talk occurring at 1:55. If taking infield causes a delay in the start of a game at its regular scheduled time, depending on the time, infield will either be shortened by each team or not conducted.

**Injuries:** In the event of an injury, the player shall be given no more than five minutes to recover or “shake it off”. If a player is not able to continue for at least one pitch, he must be removed from the game and will not be allowed to reenter the game. In the event of a blood-related injury, the area must be covered, and any bloody garments removed. The team may take five minutes to stop the bleeding, cover the area, and replace the clothing. If the injury is minor and the team removes the player to dress a wound and change clothes, the player may return subject to normal reentry rules. If a base runner or batter is injured and cannot continue to play, and there are no available substitutes on the bench, the player who made the previous out shall replace the injured player as a batter or base runner only, until he is either out or scores or the inning is over.

No artificial noisemakers of any kind may be used in any games played at the Complex.

**League/Post Season Tournament Start/Completion Dates:** WVBR will establish a League/Post Season Tournament Start/Drop Dead Completion Date. Every attempt will be made to play League/Post Season Tournament games.

- Should any League Game not be made up prior to the Drop-Dead League Completion date, the League Standings will be frozen. The League Standings will then be calculated based on League Win/Loss percentage to determine a Regular Season Champion and seeding for the Post Season Tournament will be established.
- Should a team refuse to make up a league game as recommended by the League President, regardless of circumstance; a 6-0 forfeit (Cal Ripken Division) or 7-0 forfeit (Babe Ruth Division) win will be awarded to the opposing team.
- If a Post Season Tournament cannot be completed by the Drop-Dead Conclusion Date, The Tournament Trophy will be awarded to the Regular Season Champion.

A variance may be granted for rosters consisting of 11 players at the League Charter Meeting provided that the affected area continues to actively seek a 12<sup>th</sup> player. Team rosters consisting of 10 players or less will not be considered for League Charter.

**Slide Rule:** A legal slide can be either foot first or headfirst. If a runner slides feet first, at least one buttock will be on the ground. If a runner slides, he must slide within reach with either a hand or a foot. A runner may slide or run in a direction away from the fielder to avoid making contact or altering the play of a fielder.

1. A slide is illegal if:
  - A. A runner uses a rolling, cross-body, or pop-up slide into an infielder.
  - B. The runner’s raised leg is higher than the fielder’s knee when the fielder is in a standing position.

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- C. The runner goes beyond the base and contacts or alters the play of a fielder.
- D. The runner slashes or kicks a fielder.
- E. The runner tries to injure the fielder.
- F. The runner, on a force play, does not slide on the ground and in a direct line between the two bases.

**Start/End a Game:** To legally start a game, a team must have a minimum of ten eligible players.

**Local Rule:** (See rule change above regarding batting less than 10 players) A team may drop to 8 players during a game if a player becomes ill or injured. If a team drops to 8 players due to becoming ill or injured, an out will be recorded for each subsequent at bat when that spot comes up in the batting order. If a team drops to 7 players in the batting order, the game shall be ruled a forfeit.