



Bloordale Baseball Rookieball HL Rules

LAST UPDATED: Rules Committee March 26th, 2018

Rookie Ball is an important stage in the transition to full-scale baseball. The rules for playing Rookie Ball in the Bloordale House League shall be the rules of the Ontario Baseball Association, except as where amended by the BBL.

Our mandate is to ensure players enjoy playing baseball for a lifetime, while being safe and teaching baseball fundamentals at the same time. Our rules put a focus on teaching and encouraging players to “make the correct baseball plays”.

In applying the rules, both the normal rules and our variations, we must remember that these are 8- and 9-year-old children, who in most part are unaware of or just beginning to learn the rules. Some discretion is given to the umpire in terms of assessing intention, who will then ruling accordingly. Coaches should meet before each game to clarify rules and assignments.

1. Umpires

- a. The umpire is responsible for all calls on the baseball diamond, including but not limited to: Time, safe, out, foul ball, out of play, dead ball, pitch, no pitch.
- b. The umpire is responsible for the enforcement of all rules .
- c. The umpire will determine the time of first pitch and determining the open inning as defined below.

2. Player Rotations / Lineup

- a. All players must be equally rotated through every position during the year
- b. All player must be equally rotated through the batting order during the year
- c. No Player may sit twice before every other player has had to sit at least once.
- d. A maximum of 10 players are allowed on the field in defensive positions as defined as Group A and Group B (see sections e. and f. below)
- e. Group A includes pitcher, first base, second base, third base and short stop.
- f. Group B includes catcher, left field, left-centre field, right field and right-centre field.
- g. A player can play no more than 50% of his/her time in Group A or B positions
- h. Players must be rotated between Group A and Group B. **No player may play two inning in a row in either Group A or Group B**
- i. No player may play more than two innings at the same position in Group A
- j. If a team has more than 10 players, Group C is formed. This Group must sit on the bench. There must be an even rotation for all players through Group A, Group B and Group C, as required by the number of players present.
- k. If a team is short players then exceptions are made to 2h, however, the “extra position(s)” must be rotated equally between players.
- l. If a team has only nine players, then they must use only three outfielders and a catcher.
- m. If a team has only eight players, then they can drop the catcher and have home plate covered by the pitcher including ‘last batter’ situations.
- n. If a team has only seven players, then they must DEFAULT the game

3. Batting Player Positioning

- a. For safety, there is NO on-deck circle.
- b. Batting team must be in dugouts and NOT standing in the opening
- c. Players are not allowed to be holding bats in the dugout
- d. Batter may not enter the field unless wearing an approve baseball helmet with chin strap



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4. Defensive Player Positioning

- a. For safety, and fairness, infielders (except pitcher) must be positioned behind the “base line” prior to a pitch being thrown.
- b. The pitcher can be no closer to home plate than the 4’ “pitcher line”. Both feet must be on this line.
- c. Outfielders can be no closer to home plate than the edge of the grass when the ball is being pitched.
- d. Defensive players cannot move until the ball is in play.

5. Coaches Positioning

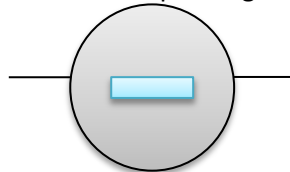
- a. 1st and 3rd base coaches must come no closer than two feet to the first and third base lines and cannot touch, grab or physically control a runner.
- b. We highly suggest a “batting” coach stand in the dugout doorway to
 - i. Protect Players in the Dugout
 - ii. Provide direction to the batter (adjust stance, position in batter’s box, etc.)
- c. A defensive coach may be placed in the OF to help position players and provide direction. The coach must be behind the outfielders and not obstruct play

6. Batting - Pitching Machine

- a. Teams can adjust the pitching machine any time during the inning. It is at the discretion of the batting team.

7. Pitcher’s Circle

- a. A circle of 4 foot radius must be clearly defined around the pitching machine.
- b. Two 3 foot lines must be clearly defined in line with the front of the rubber running off of the circle
- c. Pitching machine is placed over the pitching rubber (see picture below)



- d. **Defensive players cannot enter, reach into or step into the circle to play a ball.**
 - i. If a defensive player enters the circle to play a ball the umpire must immediately call time and **all runners** are awarded one base regardless of being forced.
 - ii. When a ball comes to rest in the pitcher’s circle without having been touched by the defensive team, the ball is dead and the umpire must immediately call time.
 1. Batter is awarded 1st base. Base runners only advance if forced

8. Batting - Pitches

- a. Batters are allowed 5 good pitches in which to hit a ball into fair territory.
- b. A pitch, considered by the umpire to be strike, yet not swung at by the batter is considered one of the five good pitches. The umpire must call “Pitch” (loud and clear).
- c. A pitch, not considered a strike by the umpire, which is swung at by the batter, is also considered one of the 5 good pitches.
- d. A pitch, not considered a strike by the umpire, which is not swung at by the batter, is not to be counted as one of the five good pitches. The umpire will call “No Pitch” (loud and clear).
- e. The Umpire will call (loud and clear) “Last Pitch!” on the 5th pitch
- f. A batter is out if he hits a foul ball on the fifth good pitch.



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- g. A batter is out if he fails to swing at the fifth pitch, considered by the umpire to be a strike
- h. A batter will receive another pitch, if a fifth pitch, not considered a strike by the umpire, and not swung at by the batter. The umpire will call "No Pitch" (loud and clear).

9. Batting - Ball in Play

- a. The umpire will make all calls in regard to fair or foul balls.
- b. Any balls batted into play, no matter how far the ball travels, are in play.
- c. Bunting is not permitted. Balls that are poorly hit as a result of a full swing (see 9b. above), not a bunting motion, are in play.
- d. If a player hits any component of the pitching equipment (including the coach running the pitching machine, the extension cord, bucket, etc.), the ball is IMMEDIATELY called dead. That player is awarded first base. Base runners only advance if they are forced.
- e. A hit ball that comes to rest in the pitching circle without first coming in contact with a defensive player is immediately called a dead ball. That player is awarded first base. Base runners only advance if they are forced.
- f. A hit ball that passes through the pitching circle is considered live.

10. Batting Thrown Bat

- a. The first instance of a thrown bat will result in a team warning being declared to both scorers.
- b. For a team having been so warned, a second and subsequent instance of a thrown bat will result in the offending batter(s) being called out.
- c. Runners cannot advance on a play where the batter is called out as a result of a thrown bat.

11. Calling Time - General

- a. Only the umpire can call time. Players may request time as outlined below.
- b. In the case of requesting time from the umpire, the following positions are considered infielders: Catcher, Pitcher, 1st Base, 2nd Base, Shortstop and 3rd Base
- c. The umpire may call at their discretion under the following conditions:
 - i. A infielder (as defined in 11.b.) is standing on the INFIELD portion (gravel area not outfield grass)
 - ii. Is in possession of the ball, in his/her glove or his/her bare hand
 - iii. Is holding the ball in the air (in glove or in hand)
 - iv. Requests "TIME!" from the umpire
- d. Time is called (2)
 - i. When a ball leaves the field of play (i.e. goes beyond the end of the screen along first or third base or through the doorways near home plate)
- e. Time is called (3)
 - i. When there is a 2nd overthrow on the infield (see Overthrow Rules)

12. Over Throws - Infield

- a. Defensive players are always encouraged to attempt outs at the bases. Aggressive base running will not be rewarded with additional bases.
- b. In attempting to throw a runner out on the base paths, any ball that gets past the baseman, still in the field of play (i.e. not outside the fence line or in the dugouts) is a live ball
 - i. All Runners may advance only 1 BASE at their peril



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ii. Baserunners will be assigned 1 BASE based on where they started NOT by where they are located during the overthrow

1. For Clarity - a runner on 1st will only be awarded 3rd base on an overthrow even if they had rounded 2nd prior to having the overthrow occurring.

c. In attempting to throw out a runner advancing on an overthrow (from section 12b. above)

i. Runners are advancing at their peril

ii. If there is a 2nd overthrow, TIME IS IMMEDIATELY CALLED (see section 11d.)

iii. **No players advance on 2nd overthrow**

13. Over Throws - Outfield (back to Infield)

a. Play is live and all runners advance at their peril.

b. Once the ball returns to the infield, is in control of any infielder, and time is called by the umpire.

i. Bases are determined at the time the infielder is in possession of the ball

1. **Bases are assigned as the last base they have reached or the next base if they are more than 50% of the way to the next base**

ii. All overthrows revert to section 12.

iii. Time can be called as per section 11.

14. Over Throws - Ball Leaves Playing Field

a. When a ball leaves the field of play (i.e. goes beyond the end of the screen along first or third base or through the doorways near home plate), the umpire will call time and all runners will be awarded the base they are going to plus one.

b. When the ball leaves the field of play during last batter the umpire will call time and ALL base runners will score.

15. Base Running - Obstruction & Interference

a. Defensive players without the ball (even if they are waiting for the throw) are not allowed to block the bases or the runner. Runners will be called safe if such obstruction occurs.

b. Defensive players have the right to make a play on a ball. In this situation it is the responsibility of the runner to avoid contact with the infielder. If contact is made, the play should be allowed to come to its natural completion and the offending base runner is called out due to interference. If this results in the third out of the inning, no runs will be allowed to count.

c. Base runners should be encouraged to slide to avoid collisions with infielders at all times.

d. A runner cannot leave the base path (more than 3 feet outside) to avoid being tagged out.

16. Base Running - Players Hit by the Ball

a. A runner, even if they occupy a base, who allows a hit ball to come in contact with him/her is out.

b. Once a hit ball has been fielded, and the contact with the ball is incidental, the ball remains in play, the runner continues to advance and all other baseball rules continue to apply.

c. A runner injured by a thrown ball will get the base to which he was advancing.



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- d. A runner going out of his way/moving off the base path to invite contact with the ball will be called out.

17. Base Running - Leadoffs

- a. Players are not allowed to lead-off.
- b. This should be called immediately by the umpires before the pitch is thrown. No warning is given for this infraction if caught prior to the pitch.
- c. The first instance of a lead-off (where the ball is put into play) will result in a team warning being declared to both scorers. For a team having been so warned, a second and subsequent instance of a lead-off will result in the offending runner being called out.
- d. Runners cannot advance on a play where the runner is either a) given a warning about a leadoff or b) called out as a result of a lead-off. The ball is considered dead and pitch is thrown again.

18. Base Running - Helmets

- a. If a base runner loses his helmet while running the bases, time should be called immediately
- b. If this occurs with the batter and he has not safely reached 1st base, time is immediately called and the pitch is replayed.
- c. If this occurs with any base runner (including the batter who has safely reached 1st base), time is immediately called and runners are given the base they are going to if past ½ way or returned to the previous base if less than ½ way.
- d. If the player intentionally removes his helmet during play, time is immediately called and the offending runner is call out. Players are returned to the previous bases.

19. Ending an Inning / Last Batter

- a. A half inning is concluded the sooner of three outs or when 10 batters in the line-up have batted once.
- b. Before the last (10th) batter comes up to bat, the batting team must call "Last Batter".
- c. The umpire must call time and the half-inning ended if either of the following occurs:
 - i. **Overthrow Rules and Stopping Play Rules DO NOT APPLY on Last Batter**
 - ii. The ball having been hit into play is thrown, handed to or otherwise given to the catcher who subsequently touches/steps on home base. If the defensive team is not using a catcher, then only the pitcher can make this play. Any runs that score before time is called will count.
 - iii. The defensive team make a third out (second and third out or first, second and third out) by normal baseball rules. Run scoring will be determined by normal baseball rules. No runs count if the third out is the result of a force play or failure to tag up on a pop fly.
 - iv. The batting rules always apply even during last batter. So if a player strikes out, hits the pitching machine, hits the equipment or umpire, etc. this can end the inning with less than 3 outs.

20. Open Inning

- a. Last Batter rule DO NOT APPLY in the opening
- b. The Open inning is either the seventh inning, or sooner if the time is being approached (see game timing), will require 3 outs for each side



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21. Game Timing

- a. Games are to be 2 hours in length.
- b. Teams cannot begin an new FULL inning after 1:40
- c. Coaches should meet prior to 1:40 to determine the number of innings they can reasonably expect to complete leaving one full inning to play (the last inning) in which the mercy rule will not apply. The last inning must be an inning without the mercy rule being in effect. Each team must make three outs (unless the home team is winning after the top half of the inning).

22. Defaulted Games

- a. A game will be considered a default for one or both teams not having 7 players fifteen minutes after the published start time. There are no exceptions.
- b. If there is a forfeit the players from both teams will be divided up and they will play a fun game.

23. Protests

- a. Umpires are the final arbiter of all calls.
- b. Coaches are encouraged to discuss quietly and respectfully and hopefully resolve any call that is in dispute.
- c. If the matter cannot be resolved, the game should be finished and a protest must be submitted to the convenor within 24 hours.

24. Results

- a. Both teams must notify the convenor within 24hrs of the game. Failure to do so will result in the losing team winning by forfeit 7-0. Rookie@bloordalebaseball.com