

Arlington Babe Ruth Baseball
AAA American Rules
(Ages 8-9)

Revised Date: March 25, 2019 – FINAL FOR 2019 SEASON

AAA American is ABR's introduction to kid-pitch baseball; it is geared for kids playing their first spring season of kid pitch.

1. **Ages:** 8-9 (cannot turn 10 before April 30).
2. **Safety and Equipment:**
 - A. *Compliance Required.* All players, coaches and assistants must comply with all National and Local rules requiring the use of safety equipment.
 - B. *Ball.* A Starr 5 safety ball is used at this level.
 - C. *Catchers.* Catchers must wear full catching gear and a protective cup at all times when behind the plate, including during pitcher warmups.
 - D. *Warming Up Pitchers.* Everyone, including adults and players who are not catchers, must wear an approved mask when warming up pitchers at any location, including bullpens and on the field.
 - E. *Protective Cups.* Catchers must wear a protective cup during practices and games. Although other players are not required to wear a protective cup, they are encouraged to do so.
 - F. *Jewelry.* Players must remove any bracelets, jewelry, watches, etc. The rules do allow medical bands and religious items if worn properly. Pitchers are not allowed to wear arm bands, sweat bands, and sunglasses, including on the brim of their cap, unless for a medical reason clearly stated prior to the game.
3. **Games:**
 - A. *Official Game.* Games are six innings long. A game is official after 2.5 innings, regardless of the reason why the game is stopped. In the event that a full inning is not completed, the official score will revert back to the last complete inning.
 - B. *Slaughter Rule (Regular and Post Season).* There is no overall slaughter rule. However, no team may score more than five runs in a single inning, except for the last inning, for which there is no limit. Coaches must agree before the inning starts that the inning will be the last one so that both teams have the same scoring opportunity. Despite any such agreement, the time limits set forth in Rule 3(C) still apply. If the inning is not completed, the official game score will revert back to the last complete inning.

- C. *Time Limit.* No new inning may begin more than 90 minutes after the scheduled start time, regardless whether the game began on time. All games are also subject to a “drop dead” time limit of 1:45 hours from the scheduled start time. If the drop dead time is reached during an at bat, the batter will be allowed to finish the at bat. If the result of that at bat concludes the game, the score will be final. If that at bat does not conclude the game, the official score will revert back to the last completed inning.
- D. *Score and Standings.* Score is kept by both teams and will be reported to the League by the home team. Scorekeepers from both teams should communicate during the game to avoid discrepancies. Standings are kept.
- E. *Dugout.* The home team sits in the third base dugout. Coaches must remain within confines of the dugout during play, except when occupying a coach’s box at first or third base.
- F. *Forfeits.* A team with less than seven players will forfeit the game even if the coaches decide to scrimmage or use borrowed players. A team may play an official game with seven players. Teams with seven players may “borrow” a fielder or two from the opposing team each inning. This player(s) will play the field for the short-handed team only, but will also play the field and bat for his/her own team. Borrowed players may not pitch.
- G. *Rainouts.* If the inclement weather line (703-228-4715) calls off practices or games due to rain or wet conditions, the game is cancelled. If it starts raining, coaches can agree to end the game or wait out a passing storm—use common sense. The umpire may end a game if field conditions become too wet for safe play. If lightning or thunder occurs, the umpire will suspend the game for 30 minutes. This 30-minute clock is reset each time the umpire sees lightening or hears thunder. Delays or suspensions of the game do not extend or otherwise change the drop dead time or the time that no new inning can begin. Umpires, coaches, and players must seek safe shelter during these delays. Dugouts do not qualify as safe shelter.
- H. *Makeup Games.* The League will attempt to makeup all postponed or cancelled games. Makeups will be scheduled through coordination between a League Commissioner and coaches. The coaches of teams in a cancelled game should try to arrange a makeup game during one of the teams’ weekly practices and can email the League to obtain an umpire.
- I. *Umpires.* Games will be staffed by at least one umpire. If no umpire shows up, coaches should appoint a coach(es) or parent(s) to umpire; the game should go forward as scheduled and will count towards League standings. Coaches are prohibited from arguing calls with umpires.

- 4. Maximize Play of All Players:** An objective of ABR house play is to maximize the playing time, touches, and at bats of all players, regardless of their playing ability. The below rules are intended to promote that objective.
- A. *Minimum Play Rule.* It is the intent of ABR to ensure that all players receive as much game time as possible. Coaches should plan for all players to play in the field for at least half the game. Defensively, no player may be on the bench for more than one consecutive inning at a time. That is, each player must play at least every other inning in the field. Failure to abide by the minimum play rule may result in a forfeit.
 - B. *Free Substitution (Except for Pitchers).* Free substitution is allowed in the field after any inning. The only exception to this rule is for pitchers, who may not return to that position if they are removed, even if they have not reached their pitch-count limit.
 - C. *Continuous Batting Order.* Teams must use a continuous batting order in which all players bat. Players arriving late are added to the bottom of the batting order. If a player is injured or needs to leave early during the game and cannot continue, his/her spot in the batting order will be removed and no “out” penalty will be assessed when that spot comes back around in the batting order. A team’s scorekeeper should communicate all changes to other team.
 - D. *Defensive Positions.* Teams are permitted to play ten position players, provided that they play with four outfielders; teams are not permitted to play their tenth player as a “short-fielder” or extra infielder.
 - E. *Player Discipline.* These rules shall not interfere with a coach’s ability to restrict eligibility and playing time for disciplinary reasons. Coaches should inform opposing coaches of any players being benched for disciplinary reasons before or during a game.
 - F. *Injuries.* If a player is injured or becomes ill during a game, the decision of, first, a parent, and then, a doctor, will be final as to whether a player is eligible to continue in the game. Coaches are permitted to sit down a player in abundance of caution, even if that has the effect of violating the minimum play rule.
- 5. Pace of Play and Hustle Requirement:** Players are required to hustle on and off the field between innings in order to keep the game moving. Due to time limitations, and due to the importance of maximizing players’ in-game touches, coaches are required to help keep the game moving by encouraging their players to hustle on and off the field. The below-listed requirements are aimed at keeping the game moving.
- A. *Time Between Innings.* The first pitch must be thrown no more than one minute after the previous inning has ended.

- B. *Infield and Outfield Warmups.* Infielders and outfielders may not play catch or throw infield ground balls between innings. Players must run to the field without baseballs and be in position within the one-minute requirement.
- C. *Warm-up Pitches.* Between innings, a pitcher may take a maximum of five warm-up pitches if he/she does so within the one-minute time limit. A pitcher who enters the game during an inning shall be allowed five warm-up pitches. An umpire may allow additional warm-up pitches for relief pitchers for safety related reasons, such as cold weather.
- D. *Time Between Pitches.* Pitchers must not slow the pace of the game by unreasonably delaying the time between pitches. For AAA-American, also see Rule 8(F).
- E. *Penalty.* Teams not in compliance with any of the above rules shall be warned by the umpire. After a warning, an umpire may penalize an offending team by adding a called ball or strike to a count, or taking other necessary steps to advance the pace of play.

6. Base Running:

- A. *Stealing and Leads.* There are no steals and no leads. A player may not leave a base until the pitch crosses home plate.
- B. *Head First Slides.* Head first slides are prohibited. A base runner who slides head first will be called out. However, head first “dive backs” are permitted, as explained in Rule 6(C).
- C. *“Dive Backs.”* A base runner may dive back to a base head first. If in the judgment of the umpire, a base runner, having taken a lead or having moved off the base, is simply retreating back to a base, the runner may dive back without penalty. If, in the judgment of the umpire, the runner attempts to advance to the next base and then decides to retreat to his/her original base, the runner may not slide head first, as set forth in Rule 6(B).
- D. *Plays at Home Plate.* At home plate, all players are required to slide (feet first) when, in the judgment of the umpire, there is a play or a potentially imminent play at home plate. Players who fail to slide will be called out.
- E. *Plays at Second and Third Bases.* Base runners are not required to slide into second base or third base. However, base runners may not interfere with a fielder by electing not to slide. Thus, any base runner who in the judgment of the umpire runs into or interferes with a fielder instead of sliding, will be called out for interference consistent with the Official Playing Rules of Babe Ruth Baseball.
- F. *Courtesy Runners.* To keep the game moving, a courtesy runner may be used for a catcher after two outs or for an incoming pitcher after two outs. The courtesy

runner must be the last batted out (unless the last batted out is a catcher or incoming pitcher).

- G. *Other.* When a pitcher possesses the ball within ten feet of the rubber, base runners must commit to retreating or attempting to advance.

7. Other Official Baseball Rules:

- A. *Infield Fly.* The “infield fly rule” is not effect.
- B. *Dropped Third Strike.* The “dropped third strike rule” is not in effect.
- C. *Balks.* There are no balks.
- D. *Bunting.* Bunting is prohibited.

8. Pitching:

- A. *Distance.* Players pitch from 41 feet on a flat surface; there is no mound.
- B. *Walks/Coach Pitch.* There are no walks. If the count reaches four balls, a coach from the batting team will pitch to the batter. The coach may pitch from approximately 35 feet and may take a knee. There are no called strikes when the coach pitches; the purpose of having a coach pitch is to make every effort to put the ball in play. However, the coach is limited to three pitches, even if any of the three pitches is unhittable. A batter who fails to put the ball in play after three pitches is out. However, just as in Major League Baseball, a batter will not be called out if he fouls off the third pitch. In that instance, the coach can continue to pitch until the batter strikes out or puts the ball in play.
- C. *Intentional Walks.* Intentional walks are prohibited.
- D. *Removing the Pitcher.* A pitcher cannot return to the mound once removed in the same game, regardless of pitches thrown or how the pitcher was removed.
- E. *Warmup Pitches.* See Rule 5(C).
- F. *Maintaining Game Pace for Pitchers.* To maintain the game pace, a bucket of Starr 5 baseballs should be placed next to the pitching rubber. A second bucket should be kept behind the umpire and catcher, near the backstop. The pitching team must have one coach or volunteer staff stand in a safe place in the area of the backstop and be prepared to serve as a “ball boy.” Catchers who receive a pitch should not throw it back to the pitcher. Instead, the catcher should roll the ball to the “ball boy.” Catchers also should not chase pass balls. Instead, the “ball boy” should retrieve the ball and place it in the bucket. Rather than receive a ball from the catcher, the pitcher should take a ball from the bucket for the next pitch. This same process should be used when the coach pitches.

9. Pitch Limits:

- A. *Total Pitches per Game.* 50 is the maximum number of pitches any pitcher may throw in a game.
- B. *Total Innings per Game.* There is no limit on the total number of innings a pitcher may throw in a game, subject to Rule 8(D).
- C. *Games per Day.* A pitcher can only pitch in one game on the same day.
- D. *Complete At Bat.* A pitcher can complete an at bat if he/she reaches the 50-pitch limit during an at bat; the pitcher must be removed immediately after that at bat. A pitcher who reaches a pitching threshold during an at bat must count any pitches to complete that at bat towards the pitcher's total for purposes of the rest requirement. For example, if a pitcher reaches 35 pitches during an at bat and the pitcher chooses to complete the at bat, any further pitches will be counted towards the pitcher's total and he would be subject to the two-day rest requirement, as explained below.
- E. *Pitch Definition.* A pitch includes any pitch (ball or strike) as well as any foul balls, foul tips, or balls put in play.
- F. *Rest Requirements.* All pitchers must rest as set forth herein:

- 1 to 20 pitches = 0 days rest
- 21 to 30 pitches = 1 day rest
- 31 to 40 pitches = 2 days rest
- 41 to 50 pitches = 3 days rest

A day of rest is defined as a full calendar day separate and apart from the date of the pitcher's appearance. Thus, regardless of what time of day a pitcher competes, the required day(s) of rest start the next calendar day. For example, a pitcher who pitches 25 pitches on Saturday at 9:00 a.m. and a different pitcher who pitches 25 pitches on the same Saturday at 7:30 p.m., are not eligible to pitch until 8:00 a.m. the following Monday, because they are both required to rest for one separate calendar day before they are eligible to pitch again.

- G. *Suspended Games.* In a game suspended by darkness, weather, or other, the pitcher at the time the game was halted is subject to the rest requirements, even if the game is resumed the next day.

10. Postseason Tournament: There will be a postseason tournament at the end of the season. Except as set forth below, the above stated rules remain in effect.

- A. *Time Limit—All Playoff Games except Championship Game.* No inning may begin more than 90 minutes after the first pitch. The umpire shall declare the 90-minute time period immediately after the first pitch. Any delays for inclement weather shall be excluded from the 90-minute window. The umpire may use

his/her discretion to exclude other uncontrollable delays from the 90-minute window. The teams will complete the inning they are in once the 90-minute period expires, at which time the game will become official, subject to Rule 10(C).

- B. *Time Limit—Championship Game.* There is no time limit in the championship game.
 - C. *No Ties.* There are no ties in the postseason tournament. Extra innings will be played as necessary.
 - D. *Tracking Pitch Count/Inning Maximums.* At the conclusion of each playoff game, coaches are required to jointly complete and sign off on pitch counts using the attached form. The winning coach will report the information to the League. The League will communicate the information for the next set of games and so on. Coaches should communicate about pitch counts as the game progresses to avoid disputes at the completion of games. There is no exception to the pitching limitations and rest requirements set forth in Rule 9 during the postseason.
 - E. *Forfeits and Borrowed Players.* A team with less than seven players at any point in a game must forfeit. Teams may not borrow players during the playoffs.
- 11. Rule Modifications.** These rules can be modified or suspended at any time before, during, or after the season by the ABR Board.

If you have any questions about rules, please contact the League Commissioner or send an email to arlbaberuth@yahoo.com.

Pitching Chart for Playoffs

Game Date: _____

Home: _____

Visitor: _____

Pitch Count By Inning

Home		1	2	3	4	5	6	*7	Total
Pitcher:									
Pitcher:									
Pitcher:									
Pitcher:									

Visitor

Pitcher:									
Pitcher:									
Pitcher:									
Pitcher:									

Name/Signature of Home Manager: _____

Name/Signature of Visitor Manager: _____