



ARLINGTON BABE RUTH BASEBALL
CAL RIPKEN DIVISION



“A” COACH PITCH RULES (Ages 6-7 or 5 year olds in 1st Grade)

Revised Date: 5/8/14

The goal of this level is to provide players with a fun baseball experience and to create an enjoyable social experience. Players are introduced to pitching by coaches and will develop hitting, base running, fielding, and throwing skills, as well as a better understanding of the concepts and strategies of the game. Emphasis is placed on keeping the game moving and providing as many “touch opportunities” as possible.

Player eligibility: Ages of play for “A” Coach Pitch will generally be 6 and 7 year olds, but 5 year olds (by no later than April 30) in 1st grade are also eligible.

[New] Development Targets: Players at “A” Coach Pitch will be taught the development skills articulated in the Player Development Guide for ABR published by the Virginia Baseball Club (development guide can be found at www.arlingtonbaberuth.com). Prior to moving to “AA” Coach Pitch, players will be expected to have mastered all the “A” Coach Pitch development skills. ABR will provide a player development scorecard to assist parents and coaches in monitoring and evaluating player development.

Speed of Game: The goal is to play a half inning in 7 minutes or less and five innings in 75 minutes. One minute between half innings. Have players show respect for the game, coaches and players by hustling in and out to the field.

Ball: Level 1 Safety baseball (softer safety ball). “Starr-1” NOT the “Sof-tee” which is a level 5.

Pitching: Overhand Coach Pitch, **must be from one knee** (NOT standing) from about 30 feet. Throw on a straight line from hand to strike zone. Keep a bucket of balls next to you to keep game moving. Have a parent with another bucket or bag picking balls up at the back-stop.

Number of Pitches: Five pitches only. Batter strikes out if s/he doesn't hit within 5 pitches. Foul ball on final pitch, the batter gets another pitch. Absolutely no extra swings. The biggest frustration for the other team in coach pitch is a well-meaning coach giving a batter several extra swings at the expense of the 19 other players waiting.

Batting: Fixed continuous order. Entire team bats. If a player arrives late, they are added to the bottom of the batting order.



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Assistant coach has “on-deck” batter ready to go, but for safety on-deck batters shall not have a bat in their hand, only the batter may hold a bat. All bats should be kept inside back-stop. Keep your batting order the same for each game the entire year, so that each player knows who he/she bats after. The first batter of each game is the player who was on-deck at the end of the last game.

Hits: No bunting. Ball should travel at least half-way to pitcher’s mound (20’). No walks. Coach/pitcher calls all foul balls with discretion for close calls or miss-hits that don’t travel 20’ (for the good and fun of the game).

Thrown Bat: Nip this in the bud. Call the batter out for a second thrown or carried bat. Consider drawing a box next to home plate and instruct batters to drop bat in box after hitting ball.

Base running: Player must keep foot on base until ball is hit. Any base runner who leaves the base before the ball is hit will be called out.

Base runners advance on bases until an out is made or once defense gets the ball back into the infield and it is in control of an infielder. A runner more than halfway to the next base can continue; the defense can try to make the play. When the last player in the order bats, play stops when an out is made. Parents should coach first and third base and should be well-versed on when runners can advance. First & third base coaches make safe/out calls at their base.

Sliding: When there's any play at second base, third base or home plate, the base runner is REQUIRED to slide feet first--or be called out for not sliding. All head-first slides will be called out.

Outs: An out is an out; when the defense makes a play for an out, the batter or base runner is called out and returns to his bench.

End of Inning: When entire team has batted--not 3 outs.

Number of Players on Defense: 8 - four infielders, (3rd, SS, 2nd & pitcher position), four outfielders, and ABSOLUTELY NO CATCHER or FIRST-BASEMAN. Parent/coach MUST be first baseman to take throws at the bag – to 1) avoid collisions; 2) speed the game; and 3) encourage a good hard throw by the other infielders. Child may still play an approximate 1st base field position. Rotate infield to outfield each half inning. Assistant Coach should take remaining 2-4 players to the outfield for practice throwing and catching.

To make transition to the field faster, post at the beginning of the game the batting order with player positions for **all five innings**. Also, consider having a “field” coach run to second base immediately after your last batter hits and that field coach will ensure quick



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placement of the players to their field assignment, and encourages kids to hustle out to the field.

Minimum Play Rule: It is the intent of ABR to ensure that all players receive as much game time as possible. It should be the goal of each Manager for each player to play at least half of the innings in the field. 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.

Free substitution is allowed in the field after any inning. This rule shall not interfere with the right of the manager to deny any player's playing privilege for disciplinary reasons. The coach must inform the opposing coach before the start of the game that the player is being "benched" and for what reason.

Number of innings per game: 5.

Substitution: Unlimited.

Umpires: Coaches/parents. Coach assigns a first-base coach and third-base coach who calls plays made at those bags.

Score: No score is kept.

Stealing: No.

Game Time Limit: 75 minutes.

Dugout: Home team sits on 3B bench.

Rain outs: 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 during a game, coaches can agree to end the game or wait out --use common sense. If thunder or lightning, the game must be cancelled.

Make up rainouts: No.

Playoffs at end of season: No

Any questions about rules, whether the application of a rule during a recent game or general questions, please email arlbaberuth@yahoo.com