



ARLINGTON BABE RUTH BASEBALL
T-Ball & Blastball Rules
(Ages 4-6)



Revised Date: January 2023

Goals for T-Ball & BlastBall

Coaches come from many different backgrounds. Some played ball in school or even professionally. For some, this may be the first time you have picked up a ball since you played youth ball.

No matter what your background, ABR wants all its coaches to be guided by a common set of goals. We want T-Ball and BlastBall players to:

1. Love baseball so much they play again next season;
2. Begin to understand what it means to be part of a team;
3. Be introduced to the basic fundamentals of fielding, throwing, catching, hitting, and running;
4. Maximize opportunities for “touches” helping players begin to build these skills;
5. Get an age-appropriate introduction to actual game play.

Note that game play is *last*, not first at this level. And skill-building isn't even the #1 thing. T-Ball and BlastBall is the level where we want our kids to bond with baseball. This means that rather than bringing them to the game, we need to bring the game to them.

T-Ball & Blastball Rules Summary

- All players bat per half inning using a continuous lineup.
- No outs / No strikeouts
- T-Ball will use Safety Balls #1 (Star-1) & metal bats
- Blastball will use yellow foam safety balls and foam bats.
- Batting helmets are required for all.
- Defensively, teams will be split in half w/ half playing infield & half playing a skills derby in the outfield.
- Infield positions = P, 1st, 2nd, SS, & 3rd. (A 6th player can be positioned in front of 2nd base) ***ABSOLUTELY NO PLAYER CATCHER***
- Parent first baseman (recommended).
- One game per week and one practice per week.
- The goal at each game is to play a minimum of 3 innings in 60 minutes.





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Development Targets: The goal for players at the T-Ball and Blastball level is to develop a love for the game, begin to understand what it means to be part of a team, and be introduced to the basic fundamentals of fielding, throwing, catching, hitting, and running.

Speed of Game: The goal is to play a half inning in 10 minutes or less and three innings in 60 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.

Equipment:

- Glove and batting helmet. The team will be provided a bat.
- Compliant USA stamped bat. [Bat Rules \(baberuthleague.org\)](http://www.baberuthleague.org)

T-Ball / Blastball Season

- **Games:** All scheduled games will be on Saturdays. Coaches may request weekday or Sunday practice slots in March, and may talk with other coaches about scheduling weekday games. These practices or weekday games are optional for both coaches and players.
- **Game play will be infield only.** In order to maximize touches and keep game play moving along quickly, there will be no outfield play at BlastBall or T-Ball. After discussion, we believe that there is enough for kids to learn about the game in the infield, and beginning outfield play in A ball gives kids plenty of time to learn that position.
- **Game days will be play/practice:** As some players play on the infield, those not in the field will go with other coaches into the outfield to practice particular skills. So even for teams not practicing during the week, we will still keep our focus squarely on team building and skill building.

Coaching Tips

- **Keep it simple:** “Throw far, run fast, swing hard!”
- **Keep it silly:** Every coach has a different style, but when kids smile and laugh, they fall in love with what they’re doing. A simple warmup exercise can be made fun by making it a little silly. We don’t want the kids goofing off, but we do want them to have fun.
- **Talk team:** Medals are provided at the end of the spring season, but work to have the players earn them through cooperative mini-games each week. All these games are designed to be “work together” games, and from the first practice on, talk to your kids about how the only way to have a successful season is to work as a team.





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- **Assess then teach:** Rather than getting right into the teaching, get a sense of what your kids can do both in terms of skill and attention span. Structure practices around what you see the week before. Use practice to focus on a particular skill or piece of knowledge.
- **Lineup is a must:** Having a plan will help you focus on the game and speed up play.

Game & Skills

Each Saturday we will have two-team “Game & Derby Skills.”

The format has been modified from exclusively traditional game play based on previous coach feedback and experience to keep the games moving and focus on our primary goals at this level.

You will need at least 4 parent coaches for each team to coordinate. We recommend coaches secure commitments before each game so you do not have to scramble for help.

T-Ball Rules

Game Play

- Time limit is one hour with the goal of playing 3 innings.
- Star 1 “safety” balls will be used.
- The home team sits on the 3rd base side of the field.
- Game play consists of a continuous batting order and 6 fielders.
- Infield positions = Pitcher, 1st, 2nd, SS, & 3rd. (A 6th player can be positioned in front of 2nd base) *****ABSOLUTELY NO PLAYER CATCHER*****
- Coaches for the fielding team should be located behind the infield to knock balls down for infielders. An additional coach for the fielding team should be located at first base.
- Traditional 60’ bases may be used, or throw down bases at a closer distance by mutual agreement of the coaches.
- Batters will use a t-ball bat hitting off a tee located just in front of home plate.
- Helmets are required.
- The batting team should have a coach at home with the batter, at first and third.
- On-deck batters are not recommended. If used, on deck batters must be monitored by a parent and located in an area behind the backstop for safety.
- Batters will put the ball in play and run one base at a time. If an “out” is made, runners will stay on base. Fielders should field the ball and throw it to the coach at first base.
- Once all batters have batted, the teams change sides.
- In the following inning, players who played the infield will move to the outfield skills derby with outfield skills derby fielders moving to the infield.
- No score is kept during game play.
- **OPTION:** The final batter in the order is allowed to run all the way around the bases if both teams’ coaches agree to that rule before the game.





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Blastball Rules

Game Play

- Time limit is one hour with the goal of playing 3 innings.
- Yellow foam “safety” balls will be used.
- The home team sits on the 3rd base side of the field.
- Game play consists of a continuous batting order and 6 fielders.
- Infield positions = Pitcher, 1st, 2nd, SS, & 3rd. (A 6th player can be positioned in front of 2nd base) ***ABSOLUTELY NO PLAYER CATCHER***
- Coaches for the fielding team should be located behind the infield to knock balls down for infielders. An additional coach for the fielding team should be located at first base.
- Traditional bases may be used, or throw down bases at a closer distance (40’) by mutual agreement of the coaches.
- Batters will use a foam bat batting hitting off a tee located just in front of home plate.
- Helmets are required.
- The batting team should have a coach at home with the batter, at first and third.
- On-deck batters are not recommended. If used, on deck batters must be monitored by a parent and located in an area behind the backstop for safety.
- Placing a towel or mat behind the batter is recommended as a “drop zone” for the bat.
- Batters will put the ball in play and run one base at a time.
- If an “out” is made, runners will stay on base.
- Fielders should field the ball and throw it to the coach at first base.
- Once all batters have batted, the teams change sides.
- In the following inning, players who played the infield will move to the outfield skills derby with outfield skills derby fielders moving to the infield.
- No score is kept during game play.
- OPTION: The final batter in the order is allowed to run all the way around the bases if both teams’ coaches agree to that rule before the game.

Derby Skills Play





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CONCEPT: When other players are involved in game play, the other members of each team will play skill-based mini-games, or a “Derby.” Each week will be focused on a different skill, and ABR will give coaches a suggested game to play with their kids. These will be cooperative, competitive games that they are working together to win.

LOCATION: A coach or coaches will take their kids into the outfield (home team will use left field, visiting team right field) to conduct their derby. They will play this game until the game inning is complete, and then the groups will trade places.

EXAMPLE: HIT-THE-COACH DERBY! Players are given soft balls (practice balls, tennis balls) and all throw at the same time trying to bop the coach. If the team *together* bop the coach 100 times in the full hour, then the whole team wins. Bonus points for good form or longer throws can be awarded. This makes the game a full team cooperative exercise with the groups building on each other’s score to reach a common goal.

AWARD: ABR recommends that players are awarded stickers for winning the games, working toward the goal of winning their medal at the end of the season.

Post Game

At the 1-hour point, teams will gather together, exchange “good game” handshakes, and return to their benches. Coaches will award players stickers for winning their Derby game of the day, and for examples of good play or good sportsmanship.

Weather

Rained-out games will not be made up. Teams may use optional practice dates and fields to make up games at their discretion.

PRACTICE

Optional Practices

Coaches are given the option of reserving a weekly practice field. ABR will give coaches a weekly preview of skills for that week along with suggested drills, and would recommend that coaches focus on that skill during their practice. Practice slots can be used for makeup games.

HAVE A GREAT SEASON!

