



Uxbridge Baseball Association A Ball Rules & Coaching Guide

Last updated: February 26,

Introduction:

A Ball is the youngest level of Uxbridge Baseball and is an instructional, non-competitive league. The goal is to introduce the game to young players and make it fun.

A Ball is available to players with a baseball age of 5 and 6.

A Ball is also available to players with a baseball age of 4, but a parent must volunteer as an assistant coach for the team. A parent must be on the field at all times with a player of this age group and must go through the UBA Parent Check (CORI) process.

Game Structure:

- Length = 1 hour and 15 minutes; 4 innings is the target; but do not start a full inning with less than 15 minutes of field time
 - I.e., if the game started at 8:00 and it is 9:05 and the 3rd inning just completed, do not start the 4th.
- Each team bats all players in every inning
- There are no outs, all players are safe at each base
- All hits are singles, unless the ball flies to the outfield grass in the air, in which case the batter can advance to second base.
- Fielders should complete every play to first base on every hit.
- Final hitter of each ½ inning hits a “homerun” and gets to circle the bases.
 - This should be a different hitter each inning (if possible)
 - Batting order does not matter
- No Strikeouts
- No Walks
- No Leading or stealing
- Have kids hustle on and off the fields
- Make it fun!

Rules and Coaching Guide for A5 and A6

These guidelines are to help teach the children in the A-Division (Tee-Ball) the fundamentals of throwing, fielding, and hitting while having fun playing a game. As a manager or coach do not underestimate the impact your words and actions, both positive and negative, have on the development of a child. What you do and say now will stay with the child for years to come.

Objective: Teach the kids the very basics of the game – throwing, catching, fielding, running, and hitting. Have fun and make sure that no one gets hurt. Get them ready for AA (Next level)



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Games: 4 innings long – @ 1 hour and 15 minutes– everyone bats, plays the field and no score is kept.

Batting: Everyone bats each inning. Run to one base at a time (unless there is a fly ball to the outfield). There are no outs. Last person hits a home run. Use the Tee until kids are ready for coach pitch. Every kid not on the bench wears a helmet. No Sliding.

Fielding: Everyone plays the field. Base paths should be kept clear for the runners. All fielding plays should be to first base. . Players should rotate through the different positions. No Catcher.

Avoid Scrums! Don't let the kids dive on the ball! Try your best to keep them alert. No sandcastles.

Key Skills:

Batting Basics

- How to hold the bat
- How to put on a helmet
- Where they can swing the bat safely
- How to walk up to home plate and set their feet
- How to hit the ball off the tee
- After hitting the ball – to drop the bat
- Watching the ball

Batting Advanced

- Swinging the bat flat
- Shifting weight
- Hitting the ball when tossed to them

Base running

- How to run to 1st base. (Run through the base into foul territory)
- How to run to 2nd and 3rd base
- How to run home
- How to stand on base and get ready to run
- When to run

Fielding

- Where the positions are
- How to hold the ball when throwing
- How to hold/use their glove
- How to field a grounder
- How to throw the ball to 1st base



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- Not to stand in the way of the baserunner

Fielding Advanced

- How to catch shoulder high and above
- How to catch a pop up
- What ground they cover from each position
- What to do when the ball isn't hit to them

Throwing

- Point the glove to the target, step, and throw with follow through.
- How to hold the ball. Show them the "Cobra Fangs" for their fingers
- Proper overhand motion should be 3 steps:
 1. Reach back like grabbing an apple out of a barrel.
 2. Arm comes up to an "L" position level with the shoulder
 3. Release and follow through, arm comes down to opposite knee.

Practice Recommendations

- Split the kids in as many small groups as possible
- Do multiple drills to keep all the kids busy
- When playing catch, match kids by skill level for player safety
- Get them to take as many swings as possible (Someone should be hitting during the whole practice)

Practice Drills:

Throwing

- Have them kneel on one knee. Knee matching throwing arm should be down. You kneel about 5 feet back. Have them throw lightly to you being careful of the proper form and following the 3 steps listed above.
- Lay an empty 5-gallon bucket on home plate facing the field. Have them stand back around the pitcher's mound. Each player aims and tries to throw it in bucket.

Batting and Base running

- Swing the bat, drop the bat, run to first – (Need two adults)
- Set up a home plate and a base
- One adult helps them line up their feet, then have them swing the bat, drop it, and start running (Note that a waffle bat is good for this drill)
- 2nd adult stands at first and shows them to run through the bag and turn to the right



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Base running

- 2nd and 3rd - stopping at the bag
- Teach them to get in a stance at the base – hands on their knees, left foot on the base ready to push off, looking in at the plate.
- Have them run to the second base and teach them to stop at the base without going past it, or sliding into it. (No Sliding!)

Fielding

- Fielding ground balls and throwing the ball back to you.
- Show them how to hold the ball and throw the ball overhand.
- Field ground balls with both hands (Alligator's mouth).
- Don't let the kids dive after balls or drop to their knees to get them.

Fielding Advanced

- Shuffle feet to the right or left to get ground balls.
- Try to develop/instill quickness.
- Don't let them lob the ball back to you – make them throw it as hard as they can.

Catching the ball above the shoulders (More advanced)

- Line them up against the back stop.
- Get them to point the tip of their gloves up (This is unnatural for most of them).
- Throw the ball over their head to the side of their glove hand.
- Tennis balls can be difficult to catch in a glove, but can be used for a first step

Using the Tee

- You want to line the Tee up with the ball lined up with their front foot
- Ball Height should be waist high

When you know to Pitch to the kids

- During practicing or before or after a game, you can soft toss the ball to them and have them hit the ball into a screen. The kids that watch the ball are ready to pitch to; the ones that just swing are not. Easiest way to know if a kid is watching the ball is fake tossing it, and if they swing, they aren't watching it.
- Pitching to the players can be a practice activity, but the tee shall remain in use during gameplay.