

I'm human





Baseball Rules Evolved Over Time Baseball's rules have undergone frequent changes as the game has evolved. Common to most professional leagues are four balls being a base, five balls being a strikeout, and three outs ending a half-inning. The modern rules of baseball, mainly published in 1848, govern all professional play in the US and Canada. Major League Baseball's Official Baseball Rules (OBR) set governs most professional leagues outside North America, while amateur and youth leagues use modified versions with safety features. The World Baseball Softball Confederation maintains its own official rule set for international competition. WBSC rules are largely similar to the OBR but differ in pitch clock timing and extra-innings tiebreakers. Unlike other sports, baseball's Official Rules have remained static during the modern era. This contrasts with baseball's early days when rules changed frequently, particularly in the late 19th century. The game began to take shape in the late 1880s with significant rule changes made throughout that century. In 1876, the National League was formed with rules that changed almost yearly for the next quarter century. The first big change came in 1880 when batters got four strikes to be out; however, if the catcher caught the third strike, they were automatically out. Pitchers had to deliver pitches from below their hips until 1883, but then shoulder-high deliveries became allowed. In the early 19th century, pitchers had to throw with their hand below their hip; the rule changed in that year and continued to do so until 1900. In 1885 bats were made flat on one side of the bat, but starting from 1893 they had to be round. Batters could call for a pitch until 1887 when this rule was eliminated, changing the strike zone as well. The number of "called balls" which resulted in a walk started decreasing with 9 being removed by 1900 and went down to 4 by that year. The distance from home plate to the pitcher's mound decreased over time too. In 1892 the baseball team played a regular 154 game season, however this did not happen until 1893 when the pitching position was moved forward from behind a line 50 feet away to a rubber slab 60.5 feet away. In 1894 bunts were made strikes and an infield fly rule was introduced in that year as well. In 1901 the American League was formed, starting what is known as the "modern era" of baseball. In baseball history, there exists ongoing debate surrounding its adoption and evolution. The National League initially adopted it in 2022, accompanied by controversy over interleague play introduction. However, rule changes banning performance-enhancing substances have garnered widespread support as protecting the game's integrity. Recent significant rule changes, introduced by Commissioner Rob Manfred in 2023, include a pitch clock, extra-inning base runners, and restricted infield shifts. These rules have been gradually adopted in North America but do not exist elsewhere globally. The game is played between two teams with nine players from each team, divided into the batting team and the fielding team. Umpires oversee the game, usually four in major league games, with up to six or as few as one depending on the game's importance. The playing field consists of three bases – first, second, and third – numbered counterclockwise, forming a square called the diamond along with home plate. The diamond is divided into sections, including the infield bounded by foul lines, outfield grassed area beyond the infield line, and foul territory outside the lines. The pitcher's mound, located in the center of the infield, holds the pitching rubber 60 feet 6 inches from home plate. The game consists of nine innings at the college/professional level, with each team getting one turn to bat and trying to score runs while the other pitches and defends. In baseball, the defense always possesses the ball, setting it apart from most team sports. Teams switch after the defending team gets three players out of the batting team. The winner is determined by the team with the most runs after nine innings. If the home team leads after the top of the ninth, play ceases, and an X is recorded for the home team's score. Innings are played until one team outscores the other at the end of an inning or the home team takes the lead in any inning after the ninth. When a batter makes contact, they follow through and attempt to hit the ball into fair territory. The pitcher stands behind home plate, throwing pitches towards it while maintaining one foot on the rubber. The catcher signals the desired location of the ball and receives pitches that miss. To get batters out, teams use various methods like catching balls in the air or tagging them with their foot. If a player reaches home plate safely without being caught, they score a run. A home run is scored when the ball hits the fence on an enclosed field or one of the foul poles on a field with a pole. The team with the most runs at the end of nine innings wins. The standard baseball fielding positions are designed to prevent baserunners from scoring. The defensive team, composed of nine players, must be positioned in fair territory at the moment the pitch is delivered. The positions, however, can shift depending on specific batters or game situations. The most common fielding positions are: pitcher (1), catcher (2), first baseman (3), second baseman (4), third baseman (5), shortstop (6), left fielder (7), center fielder (8), and right fielder (9). While teams may use different schemes, the numbering convention was established by Henry Chadwick. Each position has a unique level of difficulty, with catcher being the most challenging and first base being the least difficult. The pitcher and catcher form the "battery," working together to get the batter out and defend against batted balls. The first baseman stands further away from second base than other infielders, with the shortstop playing to their left. The first baseman's main job is to make plays at first base on ground balls hit by other infielders. When they catch a ball, they must maintain contact with the base before the batter reaches it to record an out. This often requires them to stretch and use a specially designed mitt. They also receive throws from the pitcher to tag runners out who have reached base safely. The position is less physically demanding than others but still requires skill. The second baseman covers the area to the first-base side of second base, providing backup for the first baseman in bunt situations and acting as a cut-off for outfielders. They also cover second or third base and the near part of left field. This player's defensive demands are high, so they don't need to be skilled hitters. The shortstop fills the gap between second and third bases, covering these areas and providing backup in left field. They're also a cut-off for outfielders, acting as an intermediary between them and the infield. This position is the most demanding defensively, so a good shortstop doesn't need to be a skilled hitter. The third baseman's primary requirement is a strong throwing arm, allowing them to make long throws across the infield. Quick reaction time is also essential, as they tend to see more sharply-hit balls than other infielders. This position is often referred to as the "hot corner" due to the high volume of ground balls hit in this area. The three outfielders – left fielder, center fielder, and right fielder – are so named from the catcher's perspective looking out onto the field. The right fielder typically has the strongest arm, with a need to make throws on runners attempting to take third base. The center fielder covers more territory than corner outfielders, requiring quickness, agility, and a strong arm. They're often considered the outfield leader, directing left- and right-fielders when fielding fly balls. The left fielder usually has the weakest arm among outfielders, as they don't need to throw the ball as far to prevent base advances. Baserunners are crucial for teams as they need good fielding and catching skills. The left fielder receives more balls due to right-handed hitters pulling the ball into their territory. Each outfielder runs back up a nearby outfielder, and also supports infielders on batted balls and thrown balls. Effective pitching is vital in baseball, requiring pitchers to throw over 100 pitches per game. However, most pitchers tire before completing a full game. In recent years, starting pitchers typically only go for six or seven innings, every five days. Teams often use multiple pitchers, including the starter and relief pitchers, who can be substituted like other players. In general, starting pitchers are not used in relief situations unless necessary during the post-season. If a team uses many extra innings, they may empty their bullpen. To avoid embarrassment, teams designate emergency relief pitchers. In baseball's early years, squads were smaller, and relief pitchers were uncommon. Today, teams frequently use two to five pitchers per game due to pitch count emphasis. Pitchers have a variety of pitches at their disposal, including location, velocity, movement, and arm position. Most pitchers master two or three types of pitches, while some throw up to six with varying degrees control. Common pitches include fastballs, curveballs, change-ups, splitter finger fastballs, and sliders, each requiring different techniques and skill levels. Given article text here The knuckleball, Vulcan changeup, and circle changeup are unique pitches in baseball. A knuckleball is thrown with little spin, making it unpredictable. The Vulcan changeup mimics a fastball but arrives at lower velocity due to the pitcher's grip. The circle changeup is also thrown at lower velocity when held differently. Baseball pitchers use various strategies. The "fastball/change-up" combination is effective. A batter swinging at a fastball would be fooled by the slower change-up. Some pitchers, like Walter Johnson, used sidearm or submarine pitching styles, which can be difficult to hit due to ball angle and movement. The pitch clock has been introduced in some leagues to speed up gameplay. This rule limits the time between pitches but does not apply in all top-level leagues. In baseball, teams strategically position fielders to prevent runs from scoring. Defensive tactics include playing for the bunt, preventing stolen bases, and positioning fielders near expected hitting locations. The OBR restricted infield shifts in 2023, requiring two infielders on either side of second base before each pitch. South Korea's KBO League may adopt a similar rule in 2025. The batting team's goal is to score runs by successfully executing plays at bat. A batter must put the ball in play and then beat a throw to first base to advance. The team sends its players to the plate in a predetermined order, with each player becoming a batter. Batters can advance safely through a hit, walk, or error. When a batter hits a fair ball, they must run to first base and may continue or stop at any base unless put out. A successful hit earns the batter a base, with singles being reached only to first base, doubles to second, triples to third, and home runs allowing the batter to touch all bases. Runners can attempt to advance but are not required to do so unless another runner displaces them. Batters always drop their bat while running the bases to avoid interference. The play's outcome depends on the ball's trajectory, with fly balls being hit in the air, ground balls hitting the ground before being caught, and various names describing different types of fly balls based on their trajectory. In baseball, when a batter hits the ball strongly in a straight line trajectory, it's called a "line drive". A "shallow" fly ball is hit softly enough to potentially land between infielders and outfielders, known as a "bloop<sup>er</sup>". On the other hand, a "deep" fly ball has enough force to almost clear the outfield fence. If the ball is hit outside the foul lines, it's considered a foul ball, forcing the batter and runners to return to their respective bases. When a ground or bunted ball enters foul territory but rolls back into bounds without being touched by either fielders or runners, it's deemed fair. The game continues with each team batting in its own order until three outs are recorded, at which point the teams switch roles. Runners can only score once per plate appearance and leave the playing area until their next turn. In professional baseball, there's often an extra player, known as a designated hitter (DH), who bats for the pitcher. The DH strike zone varies in height depending on the batter's size, but its boundaries are generally defined by home plate and the area between the hollow beneath the batter's knee and the top of their uniform pants. During each pitch, the batter decides whether to swing at the ball or attempt a bunt. If they miss the ball while swinging, it's counted as a strike. If they don't swing and the umpire deems the ball passed through the strike zone, it's also a strike. The number of balls and strikes is known as the count, with balls always listed first (e.g., 3-2). Foul balls are considered additional strikes if there are less than two, unless it's a bunted foul with two strikes, which results in a strikeout. The batter's game comes to an end when they swing at a pitch that hits them or deflects it back towards the catcher's box. If the ball is ruled a foul tip with two strikes in the count, it counts as a third strike and an out; otherwise, it remains a foul ball. The catcher can tag the batter with the ball or throw to first base to put them out. If three strikes occur on a batter, they are declared out unless the pitch bounces before being caught by the catcher. This is known as an uncaught third strike. In this case, if two outs are in the inning and the intended base is unoccupied, the batter can attempt to advance to first without risking being put out. On the fourth ball, it is considered a walk, and the batter becomes a runner who can advance to first base safely. If the pitch hits the batter or their clothes, they receive an award of first base unless the umpire determines otherwise. A swing at a pitch that hits the batter counts as a strike, and if the catcher's mitt comes in contact with the batter or bat during the attempt, the batter receives first base due to "catcher's interference". Runners must return and "retouch" the base they occupied when the pitch was thrown. This rule is known as tagging up. If they retouch the original base after the fly ball has been touched by a fielder, they can attempt to advance to the next base at their own risk. Failing to tag up can result in being put out on a live appeal if the defensive team notices the mistake. When a runner tags up and tries to run to the next base, they are considered out if tagged before reaching the base or if the ball beats them to the base. However, if the runner is not forced to advance, they will only be considered out when actually tagged. This can sometimes lead to a situation known as being "caught in no-man's-land". Only one runner can occupy a base at a time; if two runners are touching a base simultaneously, the trailing runner is in danger of being put out. Baserunners may attempt to advance while the pitcher is preparing to throw, during the pitch, or after the pitch when waiting for a return throw from the catcher. The pitcher can try to prevent advancement by throwing the ball to an infielder to tag the runner, which is called a pick-off. He can also try to deceive a runner with a "pitchout" by throwing a high and outside pitch that allows the catcher to throw out the runner trying to steal. Batters employ various strategies when approaching the plate, including reading pitchers' tendencies, anticipating pitch spin, and managing the count to gain an advantage. By studying a pitcher's pre-game preparation and previous interactions with other batters, batters can gain valuable insights into their pitching style. During at-bats, batters look for clues in the pitcher's movements, catcher positioning, and ball movement to adjust their approach. The count plays a significant role in determining a batter's strategy, with more balls than strikes often favoring the batter and increasing pressure on the pitcher to throw a strike. In contrast, fewer balls than strikes gives the pitcher an advantage, allowing them to try enticing the batter with outside pitches or harder-to-hit curves, sliders, or splitters. Patient hitting is a key strategy, particularly in competitive situations, where batters focus on waiting for their perfect pitch. When facing a skilled pitcher, patience becomes crucial to avoid being taken over by the opposing team's offense. Baserunners use distance from their base between pitches to gauge the risk of advancing and prepare for potential tag plays. Meanwhile, managers may employ hit-and-run plays, where the batter attempts to hit to the opposite field, often finding an opening in the infield vacated by the fielder covering second base. Batters are key contact hitters who aim to make solid contact with the ball, allowing them to reach base and potentially advance others. The third batter is often the most skilled hitter on the team, striving to help teammates score runs while also reaching base himself. The fourth batter, usually a power hitter, focuses on hitting home runs. In contrast, the fifth and sixth batters often prioritize assisting their teammates by scoring runs, sometimes "sacrificing" an at-bat through clever plays like bunting or hit-and-run hits. During gameplay, players frequently move in close proximity, and contact between runners and fielders is a delicate balance, with defensive players needing to touch offensive players during tag plays. Despite baseball's reputation as a non-contact sport, potential contact is sometimes allowed to facilitate reaching base, especially when the fielder is not handling a batted ball. A good slide is often more beneficial than direct contact, and malicious contact is usually prohibited for interference. Contact between runners and catchers at home plate is common due to the catcher's protective gear and locked position, which can lead to attempts to knock the ball away from their hand. Baseball games can end in thrilling walk-off home runs, with teams celebrating at home plate. A standard game consists of each team having one turn in the field and one turn to hit, with the visiting team batting first, followed by nine innings unless otherwise specified for specific leagues or competitions. Games can theoretically go on forever but ultimately end due to certain circumstances. In Major League Baseball, the longest game lasted 26 innings and ended in a tie between the Brooklyn Robins and Boston Braves in 1920. Minor league teams have also played games that exceeded 30 innings. In MLB, tie scores are rare and only occur when conditions make it impossible to continue play. A tied game does not count towards team standings but is recorded on player statistics. Inclement weather can shorten games, but at least five innings must be played for a game to be considered official. Japan's Nippon Professional Baseball has its own rules for tied games, with up to three extra innings played before declaring a tie. Some youth leagues have a "runs ahead rule" where games are ended early if one team is winning by ten or more runs. Substitutions can be made during mound visits or at any time the ball is dead, allowing teams to replace players with fresh options. A pinch hitter replaces another batter, while a defensive replacement takes the field for an injured player. In contrast, a relief pitcher permanently replaces the starting pitcher. Note that once a player is substituted out, they cannot re-enter the game under any circumstances. However, in some cases, two players can swap positions without leaving the game. For example, Harvey Haddix and Stan Musial switched roles in 1952, allowing them to both stay in the game. This "permanent substitution" rule differs from sports like basketball, hockey, or American football that practice "free substitution". In certain situations, a pinch hitter may be replaced by another without coming to bat, while pitchers must pitch to at least one batter before being relieved. Violating this rule can result in ejection if there are more than nine players on the field. Amateur leagues often allow re-entry rules for starting players, while youth leagues permit free substitution to encourage player participation. The defense fielding strategy can be further complicated by the double switch tactic, which involves replacing a fielder with another player while also changing the pitcher. This can lead to delays in the new pitcher's next at-bat if they were about to bat soon. Some teams use a designated hitter (DH), who hits instead of pitching and may not play in the field. The Major League Baseball (MLB) business rules are detailed in the official baseball rule book, which outlines the game's regulations. The rules have undergone changes over the years, with some variations introduced by international organizations such as the World Baseball Softball Confederation (WBSC). For example, the WBSC has adopted an official set of rules, which includes a pitch clock to speed up the game. Additionally, the NCAA (National Collegiate Athletic Association) and KBO (Korean Professional Baseball Organization) have also introduced rule changes, such as the use of a full-time manager for national teams and the adoption of a pitch clock. The evolution of baseball rules can be traced back to the 19th century, with various organizations contributing to the development of the game's regulations. Baseball pitching rules rubber. Iowa high school baseball pitching rules. Little league baseball pitching rules. NFhs baseball pitching rules. Ihsa baseball pitching rules. Ihssaa baseball pitching rules. High school baseball pitching rules. Usssa baseball pitching rules 2024. Usssa baseball pitching rules. Baseball pitching rules balk. American legion baseball pitching rules. College baseball pitching rules. Mhsaa baseball pitching rules. Baseball pitching rules mlb. Ncaa baseball pitching rules.