

The Rules of 1864, as adopted by the National Association of Base-Ball Players.

SOURCE: Beadle's Dime Base-Ball Player for 1864 with Chadwick's annotations removed

Rules and Regulations Adopted by the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF BASE-BALL PLAYERS

Held in New York December 9, 1863

Sec. 1. The ball must weigh not less than five and one-half, nor more than five and three-fourths ounces, avoirdupois. It must measure not less than nine and one-half, nor more than nine and three-fourths inches in circumference. It must be composed of india-rubber and yarn, and covered with leather, and, in all match games, shall be furnished by the challenging club, and become the property of the winning club, as a trophy of victory.

Sec. 2. The bat must be round, and must not exceed two and a half inches in diameter in the thickest part. It must be made of wood, and may be of any length to suit the striker.

Sec. 3. The bases must be four in number, placed at equal distances from each other, and securely fastened upon the four corners of a square, whose sides are respectively thirty yards. They must be so constructed as to be distinctly seen by the umpire, and must cover a space equal to one square foot of surface. The first, second, and third bases shall be canvas bags, painted white, and filled with sand or sawdust; the home base and pitcher's point to be each marked by a flat circular iron plate, painted or enameled white.

Sec. 4. The base from which the ball is struck shall be designated the Home Base, and must be directly opposite to the second base; the first base must always be that upon the right-hand, and the third base that upon the left-hand side of the striker, when occupying his position at the Home Base. And in all match games, a line connecting the home and first base and the home and third base, shall be marked by the use of chalk, or other suitable material, so as to be distinctly seen by the umpire.

Sec. 5. The pitcher's position shall be designated by two lines four yards in length, drawn at right angles to a line from home to the second base, having its center upon that line, at two fixed iron plates, placed at points fifteen and sixteen yards distant from the home base. The pitcher must stand within the lines, and must deliver the ball as near as possible over the center of the home base, and for the striker.

Sec. 6. Should the pitcher repeatedly fail to deliver to the striker fair balls, for the apparent purpose of delaying the game, or for any other cause, the umpire, after warning him, shall call one ball, and if the pitcher persists in such action, two and three balls; when three balls shall have been called, the striker shall be entitled to the first base; and should any base be occupied at that time, each player occupying them shall be entitled to one base without being put out.

Sec. 7. The ball must be pitched, not jerked nor thrown to the bat; and whenever the pitcher draws back his hand, or moves with the apparent purpose or pretension to deliver the ball, he shall so deliver it, and he must have neither foot in advance of the front line or off the ground at the time of delivering the ball; and if he fails in either of these particulars, then it shall be declared a baulk.

Sec. 8. When baulk is made by the pitcher, every player running the bases is entitled to one base, without being put out.

Sec. 9. If the ball, from a stroke of the bat, first touches the ground, the person of a player or any other object behind the range of home and the first base, or home and the third base, it shall be termed foul, and must be so declared by the umpire, unasked. If the ball first touches the ground, either upon, or in front of the range of those bases, it shall be considered fair.

Sec. 10. A player making the home base, shall be entitled to score one run.

Sec. 11. If three balls are struck at, and missed, and the last one is not caught, either flying or upon the first bound, it shall be considered fair, and the striker must attempt to make his run.

Sec. 12. The striker is out if a foul ball is caught, either before touching the ground, or upon the first bound.

Sec. 13. Or, if three balls are struck at and missed, and the last is caught, either before touching the ground, or upon the first bound;

Sec. 14. Or, if a fair ball is struck, and the ball is caught either without having touched the ground, or upon the first bound;

Sec. 15. Or, if a fair ball is struck, and the ball is held by an adversary on the first base, before the striker touches that base.

Sec. 16. Any player running the bases is out, if at any time he is touched by the ball while in play in the hands of an adversary, without some part of his person being on a base.

Sec. 17. No ace nor base can be made upon a foul ball; such a ball shall be considered dead, and not in play until it shall first have been settled in the hands of the pitcher. In such cases players running bases shall return to them, and may be put out in so returning in the same manner as the striker when running to the first base.

Sec. 18. No ace or base can be made when a fair ball has been caught without having touched the ground; such a ball shall be considered alive and in play. In such players running bases shall return to them, and may be put out in so returning, in the same manner as the striker when running to first base; but players, when balls are so caught, may run their bases immediately after the ball has been settled in the hands of the player catching it.

Sec. 19. The striker must stand on a line drawn through the center of the home base, not exceeding in length three feet from either side thereof, and parallel with the line occupied by the pitcher. He shall be considered the striker until he has made the first base. Players must strike in regular rotation, and, after the first innings

is played, the turn commences with the player who stands on the list next to the one who lost the third hand.

Sec. 20. Players must make their bases in the order of striking; and when a fair ball is struck, and not caught flying (or on the first bound), the first base must be vacated, as also the second and third bases, if they are occupied at the same time. Players may be put out on any base, under these circumstances, in the same manner as the striker when running to the first base.

Sec. 21. Players running the bases must, so far as possible, keep upon the direct line between the bases; and, must make them in the following order (word deleted): first, second, third, and home, and if returning must reverse this order; and should any player run three feet out of this line for the purpose of avoiding the ball in the hands of an adversary, he shall be declared out.

Sec. 22. Any player, who shall intentionally prevent an adversary from catching or fielding the ball, shall be declared out.

Sec. 23. If the player is prevented from making a base, by the intentional obstruction of an adversary, he shall be entitled to that base, and not be put out.

Sec. 24. If an adversary stops the ball with his hat or cap, or takes it from the hands of a party not engaged in the game, no player can be put out unless the ball shall first have been settled in the hands of the pitcher.

Sec. 25. If a ball, from the stroke of a bat, is held under any other circumstances than as enumerated in Section 24d, and without having touched the ground more than once, the striker is out.

Sec. 26. If two hands are already out, no player running home at the time a ball is struck, can make an ace if the striker is put out.

Sec. 27. An innings must be concluded at the time the third hand is put out.

Sec. 28. The game shall consist of nine innings to each side, when, should the number of runs be equal, the play shall be continued until a majority of runs, upon an equal number of innings, shall be declared, which shall conclude the game.

Sec. 29. In playing all matches, nine players from each club shall constitute a full field, and they must have been regular members of the club which they represent, and of no other club, for thirty days prior to the match. No change or substitution shall be made after the game has been commenced unless for reason of illness or injury. Position of players and choice of innings shall be determined by captains previously appointed for that purpose by the respective clubs.

Sec. 30. The umpire shall take care that the regulations respecting balls, bats, bases, and the pitcher's and striker's positions, are strictly observed. He shall keep a record of the game, in a book prepared for the purpose; he shall be the judge of fair and unfair play, and shall determine all disputes and differences which may occur during the game; he shall take especial care to declare all foul balls and baulks, immediately upon their occurrence, unasked, and in a distinct and audible manner. He shall, in every instance, before leaving the ground, declare the winning club, and shall record his decision in the score books of the two clubs.

Sec. 31. In all matches the umpire shall be selected by the captains of the respective sides, and shall perform all the duties enumerated in section 30, except recording the game, which shall be done by two scorers, one of whom shall be appointed by each of the contending clubs.

Sec. 32. No person engaged in a match, either as umpire, scorer, or player, shall be either directly or indirectly, interested in any bet upon the game. Neither umpire, scorer, nor player shall be changed during a match, unless with the consent of both parties (except for a violation of this law), except as provided in section 29, and then the umpire may dismiss any transgressors.

Sec. 33. The umpire in any match shall determine when play shall be suspended; and if the game can not be concluded, it shall be decided by the last even innings, provided five innings have been played, and the party having the greatest number of runs shall be declared the winner.

Sec. 34. Clubs may adopt such rules respecting balls knocked beyond or outside of the bounds of the field, as the circumstances of the ground may demand; and these rules shall govern all matches played upon the ground, provided that they are distinctly made known to every player and umpire, previous to the commencement of the game.

Sec. 35. No person shall be permitted to approach or to speak with the umpire, scorers, or players, or in any manner to interrupt or interfere during the progress of the game, unless by special request of the umpire.

Sec. 36. No person shall be permitted to act as umpire or scorer in any match, unless he shall be a member of a Base-Ball Club governed by these rules.

Sec. 37. Whenever a match shall have been determined upon between two clubs, play shall be called at the exact hour appointed; and should either party fail to produce their players within fifteen minutes thereafter, the party so failing shall admit a defeat.

Sec. 38. No person who shall be in arrears to any other club, or who shall at any time receive compensation for his services as a player, shall be competent to play in any match.

Sec. 39. Should a striker stand at the bat without striking at good balls repeatedly pitched to him, for the apparent purpose of delaying the game, or of giving advantage to a player, the umpire, after warning him, shall call one strike, and if he persists in such action, two and three strikes. When three strikes are called, he shall be subject to the same rules as if he had struck at three fair balls.

Sec. 40. Every match hereafter made shall be decided by a single game, unless otherwise mutually agreed upon by the contesting clubs.