

Condensed Rules of Base Ball
Adapted from Beadle's Dime Base-Ball Player (1860)

General Rules:

- The bases must be four in number, placed thirty yards from each other, and must each cover 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.
- The pitcher's position shall be designated by a line four yards in length, drawn at right angles to a line from home to the second base, having its center upon that line, at a fixed iron plate, placed at a point fifteen yards distant from home base. A fair pitch is delivered as near as possible over the center of the home base and for the striker.
- If an adversary stops a 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 settled in the hands of the pitcher.
- If two hands are already out, no player running home when a ball is struck, can make an ace if the striker is put out.
- Clubs may adopt such rules respecting balls knocked beyond or outside of 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

The Umpire:

- The umpire shall ensure that all regulations respecting balls, bats, bases, and player's positions, are strictly observed. He shall keep record of the game and 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.

Hurling and Striking:

- The ball must be pitched, not jerked or thrown to the bat. 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 line when delivering the ball. If he fails to do so, the pitch is declared a baulk.
- If the ball, from the stroke of the bat, is caught behind the range of home and the first base, or home and the third base, without having touched the ground or first touches the ground behind those bases, it shall be termed foul, and must be so declared by the umpire, unasked. If the ball first touches the ground, or is caught without having touched the ground, either upon, or in front of the range of those bases, it shall be considered fair
- When a baulk is made by the pitcher, every player running the bases is entitled to one base, without being put out.
- 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.

A Batsman is out:

- If a foul ball is caught, either before touching the ground, or upon the first bound.
- If three balls are struck at and missed, and the last is caught, either before touching the ground or upon the first bound.
- If a fair ball is struck, and the ball is caught either without having touched the ground, or upon the first bound.
- If a fair ball is struck, and the ball held by an adversary on the first base, before the striker touches that base.
- If a ball, from the stroke of a bat, is held without having touched the ground more than once.
- If at any time a baserunner is touched by the ball held by an adversary, without being on a base.
- Any player, who shall intentionally prevent an adversary from catching or fielding the ball, shall be declared out.

Fielding:

- No ace nor base can be made upon a foul ball, nor when a fair ball has been caught without having touched the ground, and the ball shall, in the former instance, be considered dead, and not in play until it shall first have been settled in the hands of the pitcher; in either case the players running the 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.

General Conduct of Players and Spectators:

- 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.
- 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.