



495 League Baseball

2026 Jr. and Sr. Babe Ruth League Rules

Modified April 2026 (Daly)

The 495 League adheres to standard National Babe Ruth League Rules with the exception/addition to the following set of local rules.

Lightning Rule: In the event thunder or lightning is seen or heard, the game shall be immediately halted and players should seek shelter.

A 30 minute wait time will begin. If another thunder or lightning event occurs, the 30 minute clock resets. The 2:15 hr game time clock continues to run.

Article A: General Regulations Applying to Managers and Coaches

- I. A team's coaching staff or designated adult is in complete charge of the team whenever it is assembled as a team. This includes practices, games and any events or functions approved by the Association. The coaching staff is under the direction of the manager or his/her designate.
- II. There will be one (1) manager per team; Managers will be age 21 or older. Managers must submit accurate contact information to the league prior to the season, to include an email address and a phone number.
- III. In addition to the manager, there will be at least one Assistant Coach per team. Coaches must submit accurate contact information to the league prior to the season, to include an email address and a phone number.
- IV. A Manager or a Coach must be present at all practices, games or approved functions.
- V. Managers/Coaches are in complete charge and shall not be interfered with except in cases of rules violations and any other conduct deemed to be contrary to the welfare of the youth.
- VI. Managers/Coaches do not make policies, rules or regulations, rather they carry them out.
- VII. The Manager has final say and responsibility for his/her team; further, he/she has final responsibility for his/her actions and those of his/her Coaches and players.
- VIII. Any Manager/Coach ejected from a game will be suspended from the next scheduled game. The umpire will record the ejection in the opposing team's scorebook. The Umpire will report the incident of the offending Manager/Coach to the 495 League President. A

player ejected may be subject to a full game suspension in addition to the ejection of the game in progress. All player ejections must be reported to the League President who will determine if the offense warrants an additional game suspension. Every situation is different. Some examples of offenses that might result in an additional game suspension include any incidence of violence, blatant disrespect of another player or coach or umpire, damage to the facility or equipment, or loud directed profanity. The League President will determine the penalty within 24 hours after consulting with anyone he needs.

- IX. A game will result in a forfeit if a team fails to field the minimum number of players after 30 minutes from the scheduled start time unless the late team has contacted the waiting team and gives a new reasonable arrival time. Umpires must wait; they are employees of The 495 League. The primary reason for this league is to play baseball, not to have forfeit wins.

Article B: General Regulations Applying to Teams

For the 2026 season, the 495 League will operate TWO divisions: Jr. Babe Ruth (ages 13-14) and Sr. Babe Ruth (ages 15-16). Division participation will be determined by the 495 League Board based on registration numbers across member towns.

- X. All rosters must be submitted to the Board of Directors prior to the season opening.
- XI. All rosters will conform to Sanctioned Babe Ruth rules.
- XII. For clarification of Sanctioned age rules the following is an absolute must:
 - a. Only Babe Ruth age thirteen (13) and fourteen (14) may play on a Jr. Babe Ruth team.
 - b. Only Babe Ruth age fourteen (14), fifteen (15), and sixteen (16) may play on a Sr. Babe Ruth team.

Except as noted below:

- i. Players aged fourteen (14) may be placed on the permanent roster of the Sr. Babe Ruth team for that town, as long as the town needs more players to form a team. We strongly encourage the towns to only do this in cases where there are not enough 15 and 16 year old players to make a full team.
- ii. Players age fourteen (14) may be temporarily called up to play on a Sr. Babe Ruth team if the Sr. Babe Ruth team is unable to field a team with the team's permanent roster. (See Call-up Policy below.)

Call-up Policy

- c. A call-up policy is in place solely for the purpose of insuring a team has enough players to avoid forfeits. Managers are encouraged to call up players if they know they will have 10 or less players at a game.
- d. A Jr. Babe Ruth team may call over any 13 or 14 year old player from another team in their town.
- e. A Sr. Babe Ruth team may call up any 14, 15 or 16 year old player from another team in their town.
- f. No 13 year old may be called up to play on a Sr. Babe Ruth team.
- g. All call-up or call over players must be put at the bottom of the batting order and are not eligible to pitch under any circumstance.

- h. All call-up or call over players are subject to the same minimum playing rules as regulars. That is, they must play 3 of the first 6 innings in the field.
- i. Call-ups or call overs are not allowed in the Playoffs.
- j. Any violation of these rules may result in a forfeit.

XIII. Each team must have a roster size of a minimum of 12 players per team and a maximum of fifteen (15) players per team unless a waiver is granted by the 495 League Board of Directors. If the town participates in Babe Ruth sanctioned tournaments, the town should also seek approval from the District Babe Ruth Commissioner as well.

XIV. Additions to a roster must comply with the above rules. All roster additions must first be approved by the 495 League Board of Directors prior to playing in a scheduled game.

XV. If a Sr. Babe Ruth team's permanent roster is reduced to less than 12 players, that team may call up a 14 year old Jr. Babe Ruth player to be permanently rostered for the rest of the season.

XVI. GameChanger (MANDATORY). All teams are required to use GameChanger for scoring and roster management. Mike Daly must be added as Commissioner on each team's GameChanger account. All rosters must be entered in GameChanger by the team's 3rd game of the season.

Article C: General Regulations Applying to Equipment

I. Spikes

All players can wear proper spikes, metal or plastic, if they desire.

II. Catchers

All male catchers must wear a protective cup and The 495 League encourages the use of a cup by all male players.

III. Uniforms

Players must be dressed in full uniform; this includes game shirt, game pants, and game hat (game socks should be worn, but if missing they will not be considered as part of the uniform for this ruling). Game shirts must be tucked in at all times. Players not in "team" uniform will NOT be eligible to play in the game.

IV. Base Coaches

Players who are coaching bases must be provided with and wear a helmet.

V. Bats (both Jr. Babe and Sr. Babe)

We follow national Babe Ruth bat rules. For the current list of approved, illegal, and non-conforming bats, refer to the official Babe Ruth League Bat Rules page, updated by Babe Ruth League, Inc.:

<https://www.baberuthleague.org/bat-rules>

It is the responsibility of the Manager or Coach to insure that there are no illegal bats in the dugout or on-deck areas. The umpires will not look for bats before, during or after the game. A manager or coach must ask the umpire to check a bat to determine if it is illegal.

PENALTY

If an illegal bat is discovered prior to a batter completing his "at bat," the bat is simply removed from play and the "at bat" continues. A player who uses an illegal bat or non-conforming barrel dimension and hits a fair ball will be ruled out. No advancement on the bases will be allowed, and any outs during the play shall stand. This is an appeal play. The "at bat" will be considered legal once a pitch is thrown to the next batter.

Any bat discovered prior to the game that does not conform to the above rule shall be directed to be removed immediately and not be allowed for use during the game.

Article D: General Regulations Applying to the Game

Babe Ruth Major League baseball rules apply with the following exceptions:

I. The Game

- k. There must be two qualified Umpires at each game: Plate Umpire and Base Umpire.
- l. EXCEPTION: If there is no Base Umpire available, the game will proceed with only the Plate Umpire. The use of a solo umpire is approved in an emergency situation.
- m. An Umpire is defined as a person who is patched (sanctioned) by an umpire association approved by The 495 League. The 495 League Board has the right to exclude any umpire who it does not believe fit to umpire in the league or who demonstrates behavior or attitude not consistent with the goals of the league.
- n. All umpires must submit a CORI form to their respective home town prior to the spring season. If an umpire does not have a home town, he/she can attend a 495 League meeting and submit the form at that time.

II. Umpire No-Show / Waiting Period

A waiting period of 15 minutes will be allowed, after the scheduled game start time, for the Umpire(s) to show up.

- o. If the Umpire(s) do not show up, the team that is not the FIELD OWNER will have the right to reschedule the game to their Home Field, be the Home Team, and the offending team pay for the Umpire(s).
- p. EXCEPTION: If both Managers agree to use Coaches and/or parents to Umpire, then the game may continue. If the Umpire(s) show up, they must be inserted into the game immediately. If the Managers make an agreement of using coaches/parents, then protest will not be allowed for any erroneous calls made by the substitute Umpire(s). A Manager removing his team from the field for any reason that involves the inability for the substitute Umpire(s) to make proper calls, will forfeit the game.

III. Game Length and Official Games

The standard game shall be 6 1/2 innings with the home team leading, or 7 innings completed.

- q. An official game will be considered final when 3 1/2 innings are played and the home team is leading, or when 4 innings are played and the home team is trailing or score is tied. Games tied after 7 completed innings are recorded as a tie.
- r. Mercy Rule: 12 runs after 5 innings. If a team is ahead by 12 or more runs after 5 complete innings (or 4.5 if the Home Team is ahead), the game is over.

- s. Suspended games as a result of rain or other conditions will be rescheduled by the 495 League Scheduler.
 - iii. A game can only be suspended once it has become “an official game.” Any game that is stopped and postponed prior to the game becoming official will result in the game being rescheduled and starting over at the beginning with the score zero to zero.
 - iv. Equipment Failure: A game that is interrupted by equipment failure such as lights or other mechanical devices shall be considered a suspended game at any point and replayed from the existing point and situation.
- t. Rain-outs will be called by the Field Owner Manager no later than one (1) hour prior to game time and the opposing team's Manager, umpires, and League Scheduler must be notified immediately. Please see the Rain-Out Procedure at the end of this document.
- u. In cases where two (2) or more games are scheduled on the same field, the first game will end no later than the scheduled starting time of the following game. If the first game does not meet the criteria for an official game, it is considered suspended and will be re-scheduled.
- v. No inning will start after 2 1/4 hours of play no matter what the score.

IV. Darkness

Calling the game because of darkness is strictly the Umpire's call only. NO interference by the Managers, Coaches or Officials of The 495 League will be tolerated.

V. Standings

A team will be awarded 2 points for a win and 1 point for a tie.

VI. Reporting Scores

Scores must be reported by both teams using the scoring report form accessible through the 495 League team webpage within 24 hours of the completion of the game. GameChanger entry is also required (see Article B).

VII. Playing Time

All players must play three (3) or more innings in the field in the first six (6) innings.

VIII. Batting Order

There will be a continuous batting order of all eligible players present. Once established, the batting order will not be changed unless an injury or an event occurs which requires the removal of a player. Late eligible players will be added to the bottom of the batting order.

IX. Substitutions

Free substitution is allowed except for pitchers.

X. Minimum Players

A game can start with eight (8) players and end with seven (7) players. Any number less is a forfeit.

XI. Borrowing Players

If necessary to avoid a forfeit, teams may “borrow” players from the opposing team to play for them while in the field. Both managers must come to an agreement before such “borrowing” occurs that the game will remain official and cannot be protested for reasons of “borrowed” players. In other words, if managers agree to borrowing or loaning players to or from another team, they must accept the play that occurs during the game from those players.

XII. Cancellations

Managers may not call off a game for a convenience reason; all dates during the season are potential game days. If a Manager feels he must cancel a game, he will receive a 7-0 forfeit. Players are expected to honor their commitment to their team.

XIII. Courtesy Runner (Definition)

A courtesy runner is defined as the player who made the last offensive out.

XIV. Courtesy Runner for Injury

In the case of an injury only, a courtesy runner shall be allowed. The player removed cannot be put back onto the bases to replace the courtesy runner. The player removed, if able, is eligible to continue the game in his normal place on the lineup. The intent is to allow a player with a minor injury to walk it off, or get some attention, without delaying the game or forcing his withdrawal. The injury decision is solely the decision of the offensive manager as he is responsible for the welfare of his players.

XV. Courtesy Runner for Catcher

A team has the option of substituting a courtesy runner for the catcher scheduled for the next inning if that catcher is on base and there are 2 outs. The intent is for the catcher to begin putting on the catcher's equipment to speed up the game.

XVI. Walk / First Base

The 495 League uses the MLB interpretation that a batter awarded first base by virtue of a walk is not eligible to be put out for overrunning first base if he immediately returns and makes no effort to continue to second base.

XVII. The Pitcher

- w. One (1) pitch to a batter is considered one (1) inning pitched.
- x. No pitcher will be allowed to pitch more than seven (7) innings in any two consecutive team games. A pitcher that pitches in two games in the same day will require a full game's rest before that pitcher is eligible to pitch again, even if the pitcher did not complete seven (7) innings pitched between the two games. Violations of any part of this rule are a forfeit.
- y. A pitcher must pitch until one (1) at bat is completed before being removed, except in cases of injury, then he/she must be removed for the remainder of the game as a pitcher.
- z. A pitcher must be removed from the mound upon the second visit to the mound by a Manager/Coach in the same inning. This is known as “removed by rule.”
- aa. A pitcher who is removed from the mound for any reason may not re-enter as a pitcher for the remainder of the game.

XVIII. Balks

Balks will be enforced for all ages.

XIX. Game Protests

- bb. The 495 League adopts the standard National Babe Ruth League rule 4.19 for game protests with the exception that the decision of the league rules interpreter will be final. Babe Ruth Rule 4.19 is quoted at the end of this document.
- cc. A protested game that is replayed will utilize different umpires who will receive a full game pay.

Summary of standard protest procedure:

- v. A protest can only be made when a manager believes an umpire's decision is in violation of the rules. No protest can be made of a judgment call.
- vi. A Manager must lodge a protest before the next pitch or next play. In the event of a game-ending call, the protest must be made within 24 hours.
- vii. To protest a call, the protesting manager asks for time to lodge a protest, which the umpire must recognize.
- viii. The protesting manager should calmly discuss the call with the umpire to discuss the rule in question. The managers should NOT come onto the field with a rulebook. The umpire may consult one if he wishes.
- ix. Both managers should record in their scorebook the exact game situation (inning, outs, runners' positions, batter's count, player at bat, etc.) and the ruling and all information necessary to make a decision. All umpires working the game should sign the books indicating they are correct and the game continues.
- x. The protesting manager informs the League President, who notifies the League Interpreter with the phone numbers of both managers and both umpires, and he will make a decision which is final.
- xi. If the protest is upheld, the game will be restarted from the point of the protest in accordance with rule 4.19.
- xii. The current lineup and pitching rules are in effect. New players who show up for the replayed game get inserted at the bottom of the lineup.

Article E: The 495 League Playoffs

I. Players

- dd. Each player must participate in a minimum of 50% (rounded down) of the regularly scheduled games that are played, and play at least three (3) innings per game, to qualify for the playoffs. Participation in High School games counts towards the 50% participation rule if played on the same date.
- ee. Games missed due to injury will not be included in the minimum 50% rule.
- ff. Only players listed on an official team roster are eligible for playoff games.
- gg. The scorebook MUST detail players' attendance (or lack thereof) for every game, and whether the absence is a recognized excused absence or not. If an absence is not documented, it is not excused if the book is examined for playoff eligibility.

II. Teams

- hh. Playoff format and team participation will be decided by The 495 League board every year.
- ii. All teams in each division will make the playoffs and will be ranked 1–X (X = the total number of teams in the division).
- jj. Standings (or seeding) will be determined by total points (2 points for a win, 1 point for a tie).
- kk. 2-way team Tie Breaker: (i) Head to head, (ii) Least runs allowed, (iii) Most runs scored, (iv) Coin toss. 3-way ties are decided by the League Athletics website software, which applies the above to the 3 teams affected ONLY.
- ll. If we have 6 or fewer teams in a division, that division will play a double elimination tournament. If we have 7 or more teams in a division, that division will play a single elimination tournament.
- mm. The home team will be the higher seed team throughout the playoffs.
- nn. Each team forfeiting two (2) or more games, or causing the forfeiting of two (2) or more games, will not be eligible to participate in the playoffs.

III. Game Site

Game sites TBD.

IV. Trophies

Trophies will be awarded to both teams participating in league playoff finals in both the Jr. Babe Ruth and Sr. Babe Ruth levels (Champion and Runner-Up).

V. Pitching

Pitching will follow regular season rules and is continuous with the regular season.

Article F: Rain-Out Procedure

- oo. HOME / VISITOR TEAM designation on the website: The team designated on the schedule as HOME / VISITOR is for purposes of which team bats first only.
 - xiii. FIELD OWNER: Is the team that owns the field.
 - xiv. HOME TEAM and FIELD OWNER may be different teams.
 - xv. NOTE: When the schedule is made, the rule used was to balance the number of times each team was HOME and VISITOR. The result is that you may play at an out-of-town field but you may be the HOME TEAM. Example: Marlboro plays at Hudson but Marlboro is listed as the HOME TEAM. Hudson is the FIELD OWNER.
- pp. If a game is rained out, the Field Owner should notify the League Scheduler ASAP for a new game slot.
- qq. Sundays are reserved for make-up games that could not be played that week. By default, all teams should expect to make up a rained-out game the next Sunday on the schedule.

- rr. If the teams want to reschedule the game for a different date and time (other than the following Sunday), both teams must agree to a date and time and the date and time must be submitted to the scheduler BEFORE the default Sunday game time.
- ss. The Home Team's organization pays for the umpires even if the Home Team is not the Field Owner.
- tt. In the rare case that a makeup puts two out-of-town teams on a 3rd field (example: Hudson (H) plays Northboro (V) on Fuller Field in Clinton), the responsibility is the HOME TEAM (Hudson in this example).

Frequently Asked Questions

- 1) Is slash-bunting allowed? Yes. Slash bunting is when a batter acts like he is going to bunt, then swings away. This is not allowed by local rules in many youth leagues, but is allowed in Babe Ruth. Coach your fielders accordingly.
- 2) What kind of bat should I buy? See Article C, Section V. The current approved bat list is maintained by Babe Ruth League, Inc. at <https://www.baberuthleague.org/bat-rules>. Composite barreled bats must meet the current Babe Ruth certification standard. All wood, aluminum, and composite-handled bats are allowed as long as the length does not exceed 34" and the barrel diameter does not exceed 2-5/8".
- 3) Are metal cleats allowed? Yes (495 local rule). Metal cleats are allowed for all ages.
- 4) What are the pitching limitations? (495 local rule) Pitchers can only pitch 7 innings in consecutive games. The time between games does not matter. Example: if a pitcher throws 5 innings in a game, he can pitch only 2 in the next game the team plays. If he pitches 5 innings in the first game of the season, and the second game is rained out, he can still only pitch 2 innings in the third game of the season. If a pitcher pitches 5 innings in a game, and he does not show up for the next game his team plays, he is eligible to pitch 7 innings in the next game. Violation of the rule will cause a forfeit of the game.
- 5) Is it legal to steal home? Yes. Coaches need to insure that the batter doesn't swing, and catchers need to be taught NOT to cross in front of the plate as the batter still might swing anyway.
- 6) Is there a mandatory slide rule? (495 local rule) Players must either avoid contact or slide. Incidental contact will be ignored at 2B, 3B, and home plate. This is an umpire's call and is not arguable. A player coming in with the intent to injure or dislodge the ball will be out and will be ejected. Rules concerning obstruction and interference are applicable. Remember, sometimes there is a collision where no one did anything wrong. So, there is no mandatory slide rule and the MIAA rule is not applicable.
- 7) What is the Home Plate Collision Rule? The 495 League makes every effort to err on the side of caution when it comes to safety, therefore we enforce the Home Plate collision rule as follows:

A runner attempting to score may not deviate from his direct pathway to the plate in order to initiate contact with the catcher (or other player covering home plate). If, in the judgment of the Umpire, a runner attempting to score initiates contact with the catcher in such a manner, the Umpire shall declare the runner out (even if the player covering home plate loses possession of the ball). In such circumstances, the Umpire shall call the ball dead, and all other base runners shall return to the last base touched at the time of the collision.

Rule 7.13 Comment: The failure by the runner to make an effort to touch the plate, the runner's lowering of the shoulder, or the runner's pushing through with his hands, elbows or arms, would support a determination that the runner deviated from the pathway in order to initiate contact with the catcher in violation of Rule 7.13. If the runner slides into the plate in an appropriate manner, he shall not be adjudged to have violated Rule 7.13. A slide shall be deemed appropriate, in the case of a feet-first slide, if the runner's buttocks and legs should hit the ground before contact with the catcher. In the case of a head-first slide, a runner shall be deemed to have slid appropriately if his body should hit the ground before contact with the catcher.

Unless the catcher is in possession of the ball, the catcher cannot block the pathway of the runner as he is attempting to score. If, in the judgment of the Umpire, the catcher without possession of the ball blocks the pathway of the runner, the Umpire shall call or signal the runner safe. Notwithstanding the above, it shall not be considered a violation of this Rule 7.13 if the catcher blocks the pathway of the runner in order to field a throw, and the Umpire determines that the catcher could not have fielded the ball without blocking the pathway of the runner and that contact with the runner was unavoidable.

We would like managers to coach the kids who are catching to stand on the infield grass until they have the ball. Then make the tag instead of standing in the baseline and waiting for the ball.

Official Babe Ruth Protest Rule 4.19

4.19 PROTESTING GAMES.

Each league shall adopt rules governing procedure for protesting a game, when a manager claims that an umpire's decision is in violation of these rules. No protest shall ever be permitted on judgment decisions by the umpire. In all protested games, the decision of the League President shall be final. (In the 495 League, the League Rules Interpreter makes the decision.)

Even if it is held that the protested decision violated the rules, no replay of the game will be ordered unless, in the opinion of the League President, the violation adversely affected the protesting team's chances of winning the game.