



# RULES

## Introduction

Baseball becomes nervous, even dangerous in the 7<sup>th</sup> inning. The starting pitcher is tired. Here come the relief pitchers... Do they have the stuff today? Some pitchers specialize in strikeouts, others hurl trick pitches that try to cause easy popouts. Others try to induce ground balls for double plays (two outs in one play). Defensive shifts push fielders left or right, packing strength in likely zones, daring the batter to try to hit in the gaps “where they ain’t”.

Easier said than done! With a half a second to hit the pitcher’s fireball (or is it a curve ball? a slider?), batters have trouble changing the way they generally hit. Out follows out. The 9<sup>th</sup> inning approaches... *Hey, there’s a bird on the field.* Suddenly the underdog puts a runner on base... then another... a rally has begun!



*“The Ump Needs Glasses!”*

## Requirements

2 Players • Age 10+ • 45-60 minutes (sometimes longer if the optional RallyBird Rule leads to extra innings.) • Some familiarity with the game of baseball.

*“Baseball is the story of David and Goliath, of Samson, Cinderella, Paul Bunyan, Homer’s Iliad and the Count of Monte Cristo.” –Ernie Harwell, 1955*

## Overview

Usually, RallyBird Baseball starts at the top of the 7<sup>th</sup>. The score is 0-0. In three innings, or three rounds, each player takes a turn at offense and defense. Each inning, the offensive coach takes a selection of At Bat tiles. The defensive coach takes all of the defensive tiles (the “gloves”), but must choose only one of the two with the baseball icon.

Each at bat, the offensive coach secretly chooses a play from the set of At Bat tiles. Then the defensive coach places his “gloves” on the board in one of the spots.

Take a look at the game board and an At Bat card. The card includes a simplified illustration of the board’s Glove zones. The At Bat shows the relevant Glove zones as red letters, in this case, **E** and **F**.

Offense reveals the type of hit. The players together determine the defensive number that corresponds according to the play and the relevant “glove” values. The offensive player rolls two 6-sided dice and, looking at the At Bat card, applies the result.



Whoops and hollers may follow! They sure do when I play!

The goal of the game is to have the most runs at the end of the 9<sup>th</sup> inning. If tied, play extra innings until there is a winner.

*Note: You can start at the 1<sup>st</sup> Inning if you wish. The RallyBird Baseball board game includes everything you need.*

## Equipment

- The game board
- 7 Glove tiles. They are black with white numbers on the front side, black with red numbers on the back.
- 17 At Bat cards. These cards include a simplified diagram of the board with Glove zones labeled A-F.
- 1 Trophy card for the victor to pose with on social media, particularly after winning a series.
- 2 yellow wooden OUT disks.
- 5 black scoreboard inning tiles, two-sided, for innings 1-10.
- 11 sky blue Run Tiles, 1s and 5s.
- Red and Blue team wooden player tokens, 4 per side.
- 1 RallyBird Tile (optional rule)

## A Tour of the Game Board

Examine the game board with the infield diamond, bases for runner pawns, and the 6 Glove zones marked A through F. Around the border is the spot to place the Inning tile at the “top” (or first half) of the inning, on the left side, and the “bottom” (or second half of the inning) on the right. On the sides are 2 Umpires circles where you mark the Outs (yellow tokens). On each side of home plate are places for each team to place their chosen At Bat card. Marked “Visitor” and “Home” are the respective dugouts to hold the red and blue player pawns. Besides the dugouts are holding spots to stack the sky blue Run tiles your team earns.



## Get Ready

1. Place the black **inning tiles** in a stack near the top of the board.
2. If you want to play for about an hour, start at the top of the **7<sup>th</sup> inning** (recommended). Place that inning tile on the left side of the space on the top of the board. *After the third out, as you move from the top to the bottom of the inning, slide the **inning tile** from left to right. When you start a new inning, flip the tile or take the appropriate one with the correct number.*
3. Place the two **yellow Out tokens** near the side of the board next to the Umpire circles.

4. Choose which player is the **Visitor** (red player tokens and dugout) and which player is the **Home** team (blue). The Visitor begins the game as the Offense. The Home team begins the game as the Defense.

5. Set the sky-blue **Run tiles** in stacks of 1s and 5s above the innings area of the board—with the golden **RallyBird Baseball Trophy** card.

6. Offense takes all the **At Bat cards**.

Place one of **Offense's wooden player tokens** as the batter next to home plate. The other tokens belong in the team's dugout. Defense's tokens belong in their dugout, or if you prefer, next to the bases as fielders.

7. Defense takes all the **Glove tiles**. Turn their white numbered side face up.

8. If this is your first time playing the game, set aside the “Take the Pitch” card. Once you've learned the way the game works, always **include** the “Take the Pitch” card (see pages 5-6).

# Take the Field

## OFFENSE

To start each inning, the player who is the Visitor takes the red player pawns and At Bat cards.



Offense randomly selects one of the At Bat cards, secretly looks at it, and places it face down on the table near the inning tiles. That card is not available for play that half inning. (After your third Out, return it to the At Bat deck for the other player.)

Offense places one of the player pawns next to home plate...

*Below are the seven Glove Tiles, Front and Back, with a highlight around the two special tiles. (There can only be one baseball icon on the field!)*



*“Runners at the Corners” – slang baseball term for runners at first and third base, with second base open.*

*“Green light” – permission from the coach to the batter or runner to be aggressive, trying to steal the next base or swing for the moon.*

*“Small ball” – Putting together an effective offensive inning through a series of small successes, singles and opportunistic running—not going for the big hits, but manufacturing runs, patiently, step by step.*

## DEFENSE

Defense takes all 7 Glove tiles, then discards one of the two Glove tiles with a baseball in the glove. It's a choice.

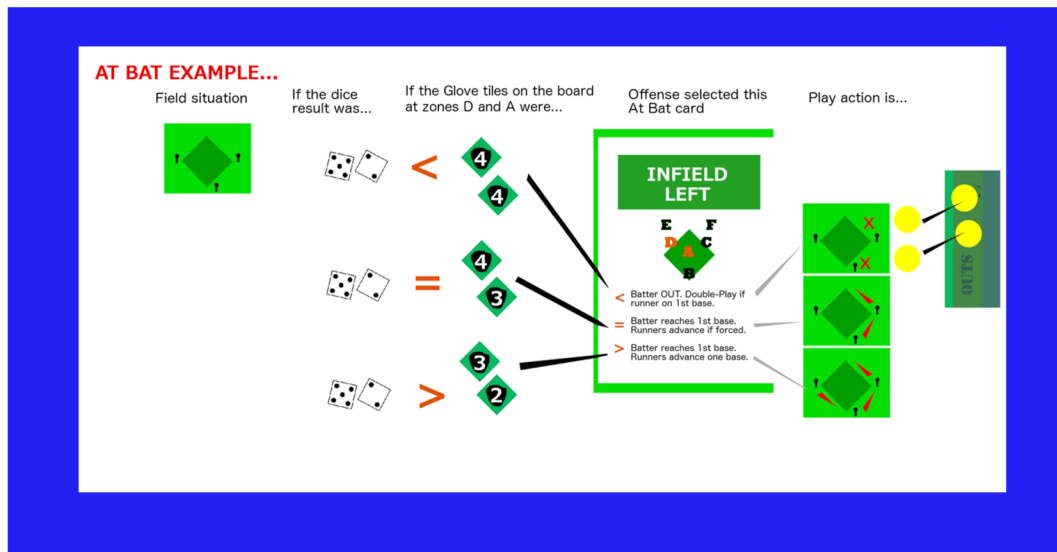


The discarded Glove tile is not available that half inning. It will be available for the new defense to choose or not in the next half inning.

After this choice, Defense starts the half inning with six Glove tiles, one of which has the baseball icon.

Important: All Glove tiles start each half inning with their white numbered side facing up. Note that they have different front (white number) and back (red number) Glove values.

## For Each “AT BAT”



1. Offense secretly selects an At Bat tile and places it face down on the card spot beside home plate. Then Offense tells the Defensive coach to go ahead.

2. The Defensive coach places his/her team's Glove tiles on the Glove Zones on the field.

3. When the Glove tiles are ready, Defense tells the Offense. (Swing, batter, swing!) Offense shows the At Bat tile previously placed face down, then rolls the two 6-sided dice for the hit number.

4. Both players determine the result. Compare the die roll sum with the defensive glove sum, then look at the card. Is the dice sum greater than, equal to, or less than the Glove values?

For example, if the offensive coach had chosen to hit an “Infield Right”, the relevant defensive zone values are the glove tiles placed in position A and C.

If offense had chosen the “GR Right” tactic, this grounder tests only one Glove Zone, C, but counts its value twice. The card shows this as “C C”.

If there is no Glove tile in a named zone (see **Impact on Glove Tiles** on the next page), use the Glove value printed on the board.

The At Bat card reveals this information in red. (See the diagram on the cards below.) The game board shows this At Bat tactic as a line connecting zones and a label.

If it's an Out, place a round Yellow token on an Ump circle on the board. If it's a double-play (two outs), place two Yellow tokens. On the third out, the half inning ends...



“Steal 3B “ tests the dice sum against Glove Zone A times three (“A A A”).

*“No No” – slang baseball term for a no-hitter, a rare game (and pitching achievement) where a team cannot put a player on base from a hit.: No hits, no runs.*

## Impact on Glove Tiles

If Offense succeeded in moving the batter or runners, Defense must make a change to one of the Glove tiles that failed to stop that At Bat. *In general, a Glove with a white number face up might flip to its red numbered side. Alternatively, a red numbered tile might need to retire from the half inning.*

### One Glove, White Number

If the just one Glove tile was involved in the play (such as GR Right or Steal Third Base), and the tile showed its **white numbered** side, flip it to its red numbered side.

### One Glove, Red Number

If just one Glove tile was involved in the play, and the tile showed its **red numbered** side, remove that Glove tile from the board. It is unavailable for the rest of the half inning.

### Two Gloves, Both White Numbers

If the At Bat card tested two Glove tiles (as is typical), and batter or runners advanced, one of the two Glove tiles must change. If the Glove tiles showed **both white numbers** face up, Defense must choose one of them to flip to its red numbered side.

### Two Gloves, White/Red Numbers

If the two Gloves were **mixed**, one showing its white number and the other showing red, Defense **must remove the Glove with the red number** from play. That Glove is not available for the rest of the half inning.

### Two Gloves, Both Red Numbers

If the Gloves **both showed red numbers**, Defense must choose one of them to remove from play for the rest of the half inning.

Exception: *Defense can never lose its last red numbered Glove tile.*

Gloves uninvolved in a play do not change value. After making the required Glove tile change, Defense always retains the current, evolving Glove side face up for the next At Bat.

## Third Out

At the third out, exchange the offensive and Glove tiles.

If a team is winning when you reach the bottom of the 9<sup>th</sup>, the game is over and that team has won.

If the game is tied at the end of the 9<sup>th</sup> inning, proceed to extra innings!

## Baseball Logic

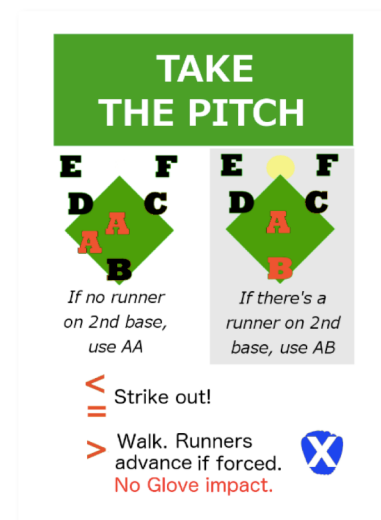
Apply baseball logic as makes sense. Forced runners must advance...

...Even when not specified on the card.

...Even if the fielders throw the batter out at first base.

If not specified, unforced runners do not advance.

## The “Take the Pitch” card



The “Take the Pitch” card differs from the other At Bat cards in two ways. (The card includes full instructions.) See next page...

1) The "Take the Pitch" card tests one of two different Glove zones according to whether or not Offense has a base runner on 2<sup>nd</sup> Base. (Spying on the catcher and pitcher and then signaling the batter what kind of pitch to expect.)

2) It never impacts Defense's Glove zone tile, even if it succeeds in advancing the batter with a Walk.

After your first learning game of RallyBird Baseball, always include the "Take the Pitch" card in your play.

## Extra Innings

If you need to mark innings beyond the included 10th innings tile, place the additional (1st, 2nd, etc.) tile above the 10th tile to represent the 11th, 12th, etc.

## Variants...

### The RallyBird!



Strictly in the 9<sup>th</sup> inning only, a losing team on offense may use the RallyBird tile to reroll the dice. If the roll succeeds in advancing the batter or runner, offense keeps the RallyBird tile and may use it again. If the reroll fails, that player loses the RallyBird privilege. If scores change, both players may take turns as the underdog in the 9<sup>th</sup> and thus both gain RallyBird powers... as long as they last. This rule may add ½ hour to game time. *Recommended!*

## Stronger Defense

Instead of reserving 1 At Bat cards, both teams reserve 4.

## Home Field Advantage

The Visitor reserves 3 At Bat cards; while Home reserves 2.

(Compare in normal RallyBird Baseball, offense reserves 1 random At Bat card each half-inning.)

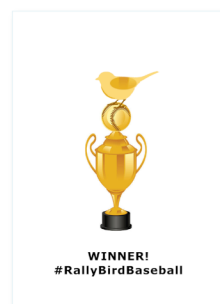
## Series

Use the *Home Field Advantage* asymmetry for a series, not necessarily all in one seating: the first two at (the RB board game owner) Player A's park, the next 3 at Player B's park... The first team with 3 victories wins.

I recommend score booking these games for history. You can download a free pdf of RallyBird score pages from [RallyBirdBaseball.com](http://RallyBirdBaseball.com).

As a kind of trophy, the winner should post a picture with the **golden RallyBird trophy** card on social media with #RallyBirdBaseball.

*Commentary on Stronger Defense/ Series: With more cards reserved out of play, Defense may become tempted in longer innings to "know" what the cards are... until proven wrong... or not... On Offense's side, sometimes the cards out of play make no difference, sometimes they're critical... it's a gesture toward the at bat place in the lineup.*



## Intentional Walk

Another optional rule: Before an At Bat, Defense may declare an intentional walk. Offense then places the batter on 1<sup>st</sup> Base. Next, Offense takes 4 random At Bat cards from the available hand and places 4 of the face up for Defense to see. Those 4 face-up cards are not available this At Bat; otherwise, proceed as normal. Afterward, return the 4 face-up cards back into the available At Bat card supply.

## Designer's Thoughts

Some baseball board games emphasize a simulation based on individual player historic performance. Others emphasize baseball as a themed board game. But most of these board games suffer because they don't offer meaningful decisions for both offensive and defense. The object of my design addresses that directly. It tries to bring together the constrained needs of a playable board game with the satisfaction of the decision-driven, open drama of baseball.

I designed RallyBird Baseball for quick play in 3 rounds, and a 1-hour game session. Luck influences the outcome, but player choices drive the chances. To keep this rulebook from being too long, I have assumed you understand the basic rules of baseball. There are excellent written and video resources on the Internet to help you- search for "basic rules of baseball for beginners." Also my FAQ might help you- see Free Downloads on the right.

Enjoy RallyBird Baseball with wiles, laughter and determination!

-Peter Gelman  
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## More RallyBird Baseball

The *\*Mini\* RallyBird Board Game* is a much smaller version of the same game, with small, flat wooden figures for the Gloves. It fits right in your backpack or suitcase. The At Bat cards are regular sized.

The *Big League & Easy Advanced Game Add-On Kit* offers 2 ways to expand RallyBird Baseball.

It comes with 30 professional team tiles and rules to adopt historic team performance to the game. It includes 24 additional Glove tiles you'll need for asymmetrical team strengths and weaknesses.

The Easy Advanced Game includes Coach cards that use the larger array of defense Gloves for different sets of risks and rewards.

## FREE DOWNLOADS

When you score a run, take a Run tile and display it on your side of the board. Alternatively, tally your score on paper with extra details...

I have also posted a free pdf on my website where you can download **score sheets** that support the *RallyBird Baseball Board Game*.



You can download a free pdf with **Frequently Asked Questions** and a **Beginner's Guide**. You can also watch my **How to Play videos** and thoughts on baseball theory. Thank you!

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*"Runner in Scoring Position" -baseball statistic term for a runner at 2nd or 3rd base.*