On Base Gameplay

Needed to play

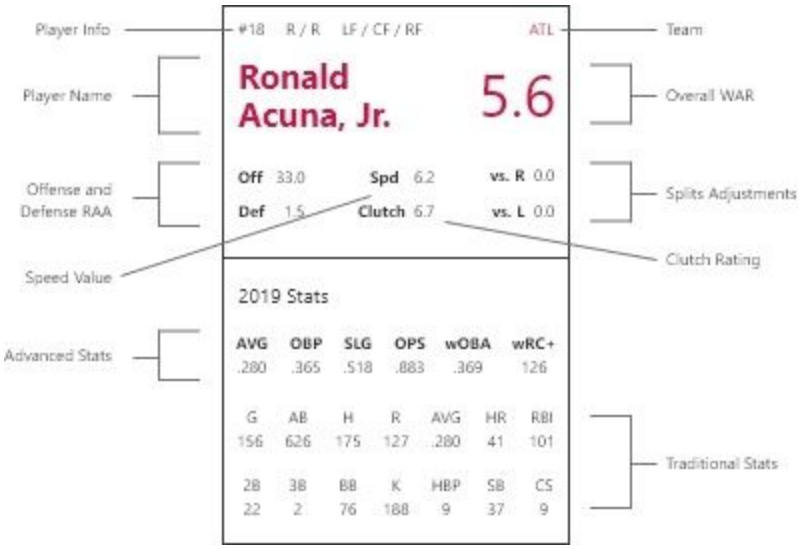
- On Base Player Cards
- Dice
    - 2 d6
    - 1 d9 (or deck of playing cards)
- Outcomes chart

Player Cards

Batter Cards

Each team comes with 15 position player cards and one quick setup card. The quick setup card shows the player at each position with the most games played for the given season. You can consider this the starting lineup for the team and quickly set your lineup. The quick setup card shows the batter's overall WAR and splits against right- and left-handed pitching (used in the advanced gameplay).

Here is a look at the position player card and its values:



Let's unpack each of these sections of the position player card a little more.

Player Info
The player information includes the player's jersey number, handedness, and positions played that season. The handedness of the player always follows: Bats/Throws. If a player has a generic *IF/OF* he can play all the infield and outfield positions except catcher. If the player logged innings as a catcher that will be noted specifically.

Team
The team is self explanatory. It is possible that if a player played for multiple teams he will be included in multiple roster sets.

Player Name
The player's name.

Overall WAR
The overall WAR is the player's WAR (Wins Above Replacement) for that season. WAR is a single number that takes into account the player's full contribution to the team in wins. It answers the question, How many wins better is this player than a bench/AAAA player? In the basic game WAR is all you need to determine the outcome of the roll.

Splits Adjustments
If you choose to make adjustments to the player's WAR value based on how he performed against right- and left-handed pitching that season. Simply add or subtract the adjustment from the overall WAR value when facing the appropriately handed pitcher.

Off and Def
These two numbers represent the player's offensive and defensive runs above average (RAA). Essentially, how many runs better than the league average was the player on offense and defense. A value of zero is league average. This can be used in place of WAR to get a better sense of the player's value only on offense. If you want to include defense into the game then Def is the number you would use to determine team or individual outcomes.

Speed
The Spd value is a simplified (and a little outdated) value that shows how fast the player is on the basepaths. This value is used for baserunning plays (steals, tagging up, and taking extra bases).

Clutch
The clutch value measures the player's performance in clutch situations. The player's actual clutch value has already been added or subtracted from the overall WAR. Therefore, if you are playing with clutch situations, simply use this number as the adjusted WAR for the situation. To use this value with splits simply adjust the Clutch value with the appropriate split adjustment.

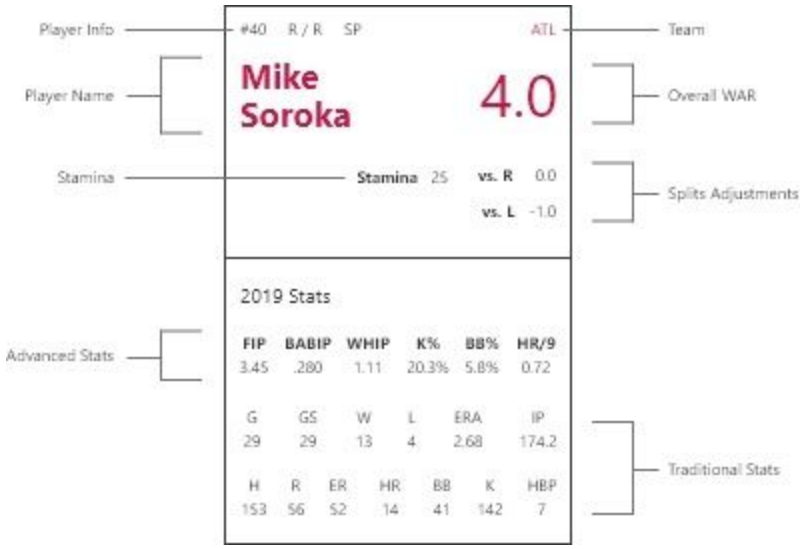
Advanced Stats
The On Base game engine is based on advance statistics. This line of stats might be a little foreign at first but they represent variations on the traditional stats we know. They attempt to figure out how valuable is the individual player by removing team or outside variables (such as era or ballpark). You can read more on the Fangraphs glossary section: https://library.fangraphs.com/getting-started/.

Traditional Stats
These are the player's traditional statistics, including the counter statistics that make up the more advanced percentages. Advanced statistics are based

Pitcher Cards

Pitcher cards are similar but slightly different than position player cards. Because advanced statistics uses the DIPS (Defense Independent Pitching Statistics) for calculating player value, many of the traditional statistics used to evaluate pitchers have been discarded.

Here is a look at the pitcher card and its values:



Let's look at the different values on the pitcher card.

Player Info
The only difference for the pitcher card is regarding positions. Pitchers are starters (SP), relievers (RP), or closers (CL). Some pitchers are hybrid starter/relievers. If he has started a significant number off games in the season a player could qualify as a hybrid pitcher. There is

no hard and fast rule for using relief pitchers (just as in real life). Relievers can close games and closers can come in in non-save situations.

Stamina
Each pitcher has a stamina value. This is based on the average batters faced over the course of the season. If a player is a hybrid pitcher there will be a starter and reliever stamina.

Splits Adjustments
Like the position player cards, pitchers also have adjustments based on splits. To use these splits adjustments add or subtract the adjustment value to the overall WAR value when facing right- or left-handed batters.

Advanced Stats
The advanced stats for pitchers is heavily influenced by the DIPS (Defense Independent Pitching Statistics) model. Emphasis is on FIP (Fielding Independent Pitching), BABIP (Batting Average on Balls in Play), strikeout percentage, and walk percentage. These stats more accurately reflect a pitcher's individual contribution to the game.

Getting Started

There are only a few basic elements that you'll need to play a game using the On Base engine:

- On Base game engine chart
- 2 d6 dice
- Scorecard

If you want to play more advanced versions you will also need to have 1 d9 die. This is not a common die. One alternative if you don't have a d9 is to use a deck of playing cards and separate remove all face cards and 10s, leaving the aces in the deck. Aces will count as 1 and all other numbered cards count for themselves. Lay the deck facedown and flip a card from the top of the deck with each roll.

Another alternative is to use a virtual dice roller. We prefer RollADie.net because it allows the appropriate mix of dice for On Base.

Lineups

If you have downloaded sets of player cards you can use them to set up a lineup for each team. The quick setup cards for hitters and pitchers can help you quickly identify which players were the "starters" for that season--those who had the most at-bats or innings pitched at each position.

Determining Control of the At-Bat

There are a few different ways to decide whether the hitter or pitcher controls the at-bat. The easiest way is to look at the lowest die number. If the value is 1-3 the hitter is in control and if the value is 4-6 the pitcher controls the at-bat.

If you are using a deck of playing cards instead of the d9 you could use the color of the card flipped to determine who is in control. If it's a black card then the hitter is in control and if red then the pitcher is in control.

A third alternative is to simply compare the WAR of the hitter and pitcher and allow the higher rated player to control the at-bat. Taking into account splits adjustments and fatigue can make this a more advanced version.

On Base Game Chart

The heart of On Base is the game chart that lists the outcomes of each at-bat. The chart is really a matrix of values that need to be cross-referenced to find the result of each at-bat. The player will get the initial value from the 2 d6 dice. Starting with the lowest number first, read the numbers separately (do not combine the values or add the values). For example, if the lowest die value is 1 and the highest die is 6 the number should be read as 16, not 7. Go to 16 on the chart and cross reference it with the controlling player's WAR. The result at this intersection is the play result. All hitter-pitcher outcomes can be found on the game chart with only one roll.

The d9 controls which fielder makes the play. Fielding rules are covered later in this guide. Feel free to also bring your own rules and preferences to the game.

Keeping Score

There are many ways to score a game. The easiest is with a pen and paper but you can also download many good scorecards. We recommend this scorecard freely available on Wikipedia.

If you're playing with splits adjustments it can be helpful to note those directly on the scorecard. The same goes for the player's stamina and speed ratings. It's sometimes easier to have those at hand right on the scorecard.

Basic Gameplay

WAR

The On Base game engine is based primarily on each player's WAR value to determine the outcome of each play. WAR is a complex calculation that takes into account everything a player does on the field and combines it into one number.

What does that number mean? WAR is how many wins better a player is than a bench player or minor leaguer at that position. It seeks to answer the question, "If this player got injured and their team had to replace them with a freely available minor leaguer or a AAAA player from their bench, how much value would the team be losing?"

For example, a player with a WAR value of 2.0 accounts for 2 more runs than an end of the bench player at the same position. Each win is roughly 10 runs. So in our example the player with a WAR of 2.0 would create 20 more runs than a player on the end of the bench (or minor league player).

For position players and starting pitchers, here is a good rule-of-thumb chart (via Fangraphs.com):

Scrub	0-1 WAR
Role Player	1-2 WAR
Solid Starter	2-3 WAR
Good Player	3-4 WAR
All-Star	4-5 WAR
Superstar	5-6 WAR
MVP	6+ WAR

Fielding

*Ground Out*s

If the number is 1-6, the play is made by the fielder whose number is on the die. If the number is 7-9 then the play defaults to a ground out to the highest infield number (shortstop).

*Fly Out*s

1-3 is a fly to LF
4-6 is a fly to CF
7-9 is a fly to RF

*Line Out*s

Line out to any fielder. If the number is 2, change to a pop out to C (2).

*Foul Out*s

No fielder assigned to a foul out

Strikeouts

If the outcome is a strikeout check the d9 to see what kind of strikeout.

1-6 K Swinging
7-9 K Looking

Walks

If the outcome is a walk check the d9 to see if the hitter was hit by a pitch.

1 Hit By Pitch
2-9 Walk

The manager can call for an intentional walk without rolling for an outcome.

Baserunning

With less than 2 outs, baserunners move up as many bases as the batter on a hit. With less than two outs and runner on second base, a single will move the runner at second base to third base. You can try to take an extra base using the rules below but the runner does not automatically score from second base on a single.

If there are 2 outs in an inning, baserunners move up 1 extra base on a base hit. In our previous scenario, there are now 2 outs and a runner on second base. If the batter hits a single then the runner from second will score.

There is a lot of freedom in the game to come up with your own baserunning mechanisms. The batter's Spd value is an easy number for determining baserunning and steals. The highest player Spd values from year to year are 8.0 or less, which works well with the 1 d9 to determine out or safe on baserunning plays.

Feel free to make your own baserunning rules. For example, any runner on base with a Spd value of 7+ automatically takes an extra base regardless outs or situation. Or you can use the extra base rules below to attempt an extra base.

Steals

To steal the manager must call it out before the play and roll the d9 to determine the steal result. The batter's Spd value is the value evaluated against the dice roll. If the roll result is higher than the runner's Spd value then the runner is caught stealing. If the roll result is lower than the runner's Spd value then the steal is successful.

To steal third adjust the Spd value by -1.0. So if the runner has a Spd value of 7.0 the value would change to 6.0. Then roll the d9 and evaluate the steal opportunity as normal against the dice roll.

To steal home adjust the Spd value by -2.0. So if the runner has a Spd value of 7.0 the value would change to 5.0. Then roll the d9 and evaluate the steal opportunity as normal against the dice roll.

To attempt a double steal use the Spd value of the slowest runner to evaluate the d9 roll. If the play results in an out, the lead runner will be considered out on the play.

Tagging Up

With runners on and less than 2 out the manager can ask the runner(s) to tag up on a fly ball. Call out the intention to tag and which runners will tag. Then roll the d9. The batter's Spd value is the value evaluated against the dice roll. If the roll result is higher than the runner's Spd value then the runner is out. If the roll result is lower than the runner's Spd value then the tag is successful.

To have multiple runners tag, use the Spd value of the slowest runner to evaluate the d9 roll. If the play results in an out, the lead runner will be considered out on the play.

Extra base

After a hit a runner on base can attempt to take an extra base. Call out the intention to take an extra base and which runner will make the attempt. Then roll the d9. The batter's Spd value is the value evaluated against the dice roll. If the roll result is higher than the runner's Spd value

then the runner is out. If the roll result is lower than the runner's Spd value then the batter is safe and is awarded an extra base.

To have multiple runners attempt to take an extra base, use the Spd value of the slowest runner to evaluate the d9 roll. If the play results in an out, the lead runner will be considered out on the play.

Pitcher Fatigue

The Stamina rating of each pitcher is based on the average number of batters faced in the year printed on the card. If you want to include pitcher fatigue into the game allow the pitcher to finish the inning in which he gets to, or passes, his stamina rating. The next inning subtract 1.0 from the pitcher's WAR (including splits if you're playing with them). For each inning past the pitcher's Stamina rating subtract 1.0.

For example, suppose the pitcher's Stamina is 24 and he reaches the 24th batter faced in the 6th inning. If you elect to send him out for the 7th inning you would subtract 1.0 from his WAR and use that value until the inning is over or the pitcher is replaced with a fresh pitcher. If you send the same pitcher out for the 8th inning, you would subtract 2.0 from his initial WAR value because he is now 2 innings past his stamina rating.