

ON BASE BASEBALL

Quick Start Guide

Welcome to *On Base Baseball*, the tabletop baseball game based on advanced statistics and sabermetrics!

GETTING STARTED

On Base is intentionally light on charts and lookups. All you need to get started are the player cards, two D6 dice and one D9 die (or use the *On Base* dice roller app), and a scorecard. All of the normal play outcomes will come from the player cards.

Choose Your Teams and Lineups

Each team comes with 30 players--15 batters and 15 pitchers. If you are not using a DH, you can use the pitcher batting card included with each team. We've created a scorecard with places to put the three relevant game play values for *On Base* and puts both teams on one scorecard. [Download the official *On Base* scorecard.](#)

ROLLING A GAME

This quick start guide assumes that you will use the [On Base dice roller application](#). You can also play with your own dice. You'll need two D6 dice and one D9. A D9 is not a common die so you can substitute a D10. When using a D10 re-roll if a 10 comes up on the die. This preserves the 1/9 probabilities the game is based on.

At Bats

Each at-bat in *On Base* begins off the pitcher card. To begin an at-bat, roll all three dice. Read the two D6 dice starting with the lower number first. So a roll of 6 and 3 is a 36.

Once you have the roll look on the pitcher card first. Some at bats will be resolved on the pitcher card. If the space next to the roll number has an outcome then that is the outcome of the at-bat. There is no need to continue on to the batter card. If there is a blank on the pitcher card then proceed to the batter card to get the outcome for the roll.

Note: Pitcher cards might include multiple results for one roll number. Here is an example,

Roll - Outcome(s)

16 - K / **BB**

For a roll of 16 this pitcher has two outcomes. The outcome to the left of the forward slash is the outcome you will use before the pitcher reaches his stamina value (stamina is found on the pitcher card). The outcome to the right of the slash (shown in **red**) is the outcome that you will use if the pitcher is beyond his stamina rating. For more information on pitcher fatigue, see the section below on Pitcher Fatigue.

Some players on each team have splits based on their performances against left-handed pitchers (LHP) or left-handed batters (LHB). These splits are marked in parentheses, like this:

Batter

Single (HR)

Pitcher

K (HR) / **BB**

The outcome in parentheses should be used when a batter is facing a LHP or when a pitcher is facing a LHB. If this is not the situation then the player should use the outcome not in parentheses. Because pitcher outcomes are factored in first, if the pitcher has a split outcome that should be used, even if the batter also has a split outcome. In that case, the pitcher wins the battle. The pitcher outcome should always be used first.

The D9 indicates which fielder made the play in the field. For a fly out use the following:

1-3 = LF

4-6 = CF

7-9 = RF

For a ground out, use the following to determine the fielder who made the play:

1-6 = Match the appropriate infield position #

7-9 = Defaults to Shortstop

If the outcome is a line out to catcher, change the outcome to a popup to the catcher.

Error Checks

Certain outcomes are marked with a plus symbol (+). If you see this symbol then you need to roll to check for an error. Before rolling for the error check, take note of the number on the D9. This is the fielder who is attempting to make the play. Look at the player's defense value (labeled "Df" and found under the player name at the top of the player card) to see if the value is negative or positive. A player with a negative Def rating will make an error if the error check roll is a 1 or 2. A player with a positive rating will only make an error if the roll is a 1.

To check the error, roll the dice and check the value of the D9. If the roll results in an error the batter goes to first base and all other runners advance one base on the error.

Runner Advance

Some outcomes allow the runner's to advance automatically. Next to the outcome you will see "Adv." This means that all runner's advance automatically on the out. Only the batter is out on the play.

Stealing

There is a basic method of stealing bases in *On Base*. Declare the intention to steal the base and find the player's speed value. It is labeled "Sp" and is found near the top of the hitter card. Roll the dice again and check the D9. If the value of the D9 is greater than the player's speed value then the player has been caught stealing. If the number on the D9 is equal to or lower than the runner's

speed value then the runner succeeds in stealing the base. To steal third, first subtract 1.0 from the runner's speed value then roll the D9. To steal home, subtract 2.0 then roll. When attempting a double steal use the speed value of the *slowest* runner. If the roll result on a double steal is a caught stealing the most advanced runner is out and the trailing runner is safe.

Tagging & Extra Bases

Sometimes you want to advance a runner on a fly ball or take an extra base on a safe hit. The mechanics are very similar to stealing. Declare your intention and roll the D9. If the number on the die is higher than the player's speed value then the runner is out. If the roll number is lower than the player's speed value then the runner is safe. To tag up multiple runners evaluate the roll using the *slowest* player's speed value. If the roll result is an out then the most advanced runner will be out and the trailing runner safe.

With 2 outs baserunners will be going on the pitch so they should automatically take an extra base on a hit. For example, if there is a runner on first and the batter hits a single the runner will advance two bases, not one. In this scenario the runner on first would go to third on a single. Batters only take as many bases as they hit the ball. On a single, the batter goes to first, a double the batter goes to second, and so on.

Sacrifice & Squeeze Bunts

To perform a sacrifice bunt declare your intention to bunt and roll the D9. If the value is 1 or 2 the bunt was unsuccessful and the batter is out. No runners

advance and the play result is a strikeout. If the number is 3 or higher the bunt is successful. The batter is out and all runners move up one base. There are not hard and fast rules for determining who makes the play on a sacrifice bunt. You can roll the D9 to determine which infielder makes the play or simply choose which player will make the play to first.

To perform a safety squeeze announce your intention and roll the D9. If the value is 1-3 the batter is out and the runner stays at third. If the squeeze is successful the runner going home is safe and the batter is out at first. You can decide which infielder makes the play and the play result for the scorecard.

To perform a suicide squeeze a roll of 1-3 is an out and the result of the play is a double play. The batter and the runner going home are both out. It can be scored a strikeout for the batter and catcher unassisted on the putout. If the squeeze is successful the runner going home is safe and the batter is out at first. You can decide which infielder makes the play and the play result for the scorecard.

Strikeouts

If the at-bat outcome is a strikeout check the D9 to see what type of strikeout.

1-6 = Strikeout Swinging

7-9 = Strikeout Looking

Walks & HBP

If the at-bat outcome is "BB or HBP" check the D9 to see if the batter was hit by a pitch or drew a walk.

1 = Hit By Pitch

2-9 = Walk

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

Player Decisions

You'll find that not all plays are strictly dictated by the outcomes. For example, there is a runner on second and the batter grounds out to the second baseman. Normally, the runner at second would make it to third safely on a routine grounder. You can decide if runners move up according to baseball situations or not.

If you want more detail or realism on outcomes you will need to make decisions on other situations, such as foul outs and what part of the field hits go to. One of the strengths of the game is its flexibility. It is a base canvas for you to craft the kind of tabletop game you want to play. You can add complexity and detail to the game wherever you want. Feel free to even bring in charts and elements from other games to determine advanced fielding and baserunning or make up your own home brew rules.

Double Plays

If you come across an outcome that says “DP or K” then that is a double play opportunity for the defense. If there is no double play available (no force out at a base) then the result is a strikeout. However, if there is an opportunity for a double play then a double play should be executed.

The player must decide how the double play will be executed. To find the player to start the double play look at the D9. It will let you know where the ball has been hit. Here are some possible scenarios:

No runners on = K

Runner on 2nd or 3rd = K

Runners on 2nd and 3rd = K

Runner on 1st = DP

Runners on 1st and 2nd = DP

Runners on 1st and 3rd = DP

Bases loaded = DP

If bases are loaded then home to first is good choice. You can play this as a house rule for any inning or you could implement home to first only in innings 7+ (to simulate the infield in) and then a more traditional out at 2nd, out at 1st double play in innings 1-6. In that scenario, with no outs, the run will score from 3rd.

If runners are on 1st and 3rd with no outs then the play is out at 2nd, out at 1st and the run scores.

If runners are on 1st and 2nd then you can decide if the play will be 3rd to 1st, 2nd to 1st, or 3rd to 2nd. The option of 3rd to 1st and 3rd to 2nd would mostly likely only happen with a grounder hit to the 3rd baseman. Otherwise, most other double plays would go 2nd to 1st.

Pitcher Fatigue

Each pitcher has a Stamina value, which you can find under the player's name on each pitcher card. This is based on the pitcher's average number of batters faced per game for that season. When a pitcher reaches his stamina rating he will see a reduction in his abilities. Some pitcher outcomes will have to values separated by a slash. The outcome to the left of the forward slash is the outcome to be used before the pitcher reaches his stamina value. The outcome to the right of the forward slash (marked in red) is the outcome you should use starting the inning *after* the pitcher reaches his stamina value. For example, if the pitcher reaches his stamina rating at some point in the 6th inning then from the 7th inning on he would need to use the second outcome on his card until he is replaced by a reliever.

More effective pitchers will see a lesser dip in abilities than less effective pitchers. Evaluate the fatigued (the second) outcomes to see how the pitcher will be affected when goes past his Stamina value.

CLASSIC TEAMS

On Base uses two newer sabermetric values to calculate outcomes--Batting Runs (batters) and SIERA (pitchers). Batting Runs is a metric that has been

calculated back to the beginnings of baseball and can be used in conjunction with the *On Base* Engine (chart) to play a game. As of now, Fangraphs.com is the only site that uses Batting Runs. You can substitute wRAA (Weighted Runs Above Average) for Batting Runs. They are almost the same in most cases. Batting Runs is wRAA but has ballpark and era factored in.

However, SIERA is only available for pitchers after 2001. To play a game using older pitchers, use FIP. This has been calculated all the way back to the early days of baseball and makes a fine substitute for SIERA. FIP is a stripped down version of SIERA that is based on the DIPS model of evaluating pitchers.

[Watch this video to learn how to get values for classic teams](#)