

BASEBALL

Encyclopedia Britannica: <https://www.britannica.com/sports/baseball>, consulted 8 Mar 2023, heavily edited mostly for length, facts unchecked; prepared by S. Meyer

(see also: <https://baseballhall.org/baseball-history-american-history-and-you>, Baseball Hall of Fame)

Baseball – traditionally considered America’s pastime – is a game played with a bat and ball (small and hard for professional games, larger and softer for amateur games). There are two teams of nine players each (or 10, if a designated hitter bats and runs for the pitcher). Baseball is played on a large field that has four bases laid out in a square, whose dimensions are regulated, and which is shaped like a diamond beyond which is an outer field that may vary in size. Each corner of the diamond has a small square base representing a safety zone for the runners.

The game envisions nine alternating innings – or times at bat – for each of the two teams: batting and pitching/fielding. The team up to bat that scores the most runs in nine innings wins the game. If the score is tied after each team has had nine innings up to bat, extra innings are played until the tie is broken.

Batters try to hit a pitched ball out of the reach of the fielding team and to complete a circuit running around the diamond touching all four bases in order to score a “run” without being tagged – that is, when not on a base, they are touched with the ball by a fielder. Runs may be accomplished in one of two ways. When the batter’s ball goes so far, or the fielding players are less efficient in throwing the ball to their team members, that he/she is able to run the entire course of the diamond, touching all four bases along the way, and ends at the home base without being tagged, he/she scores a “home run.” Runs may also be done in stages, if the batter is able to run to only the first, second, or third base without being tagged, and has to wait for the subsequent batter’s successful hit allowing him/her to reach home base without being tagged before the inning is over. If runners are on base when the inning is over, their efforts can’t be counted as runs.

The fielding team tries to put the batting team “out” by catching a hit ball before it touches the ground, by tagging a batter running between bases, by pitching three balls – acceptable to the umpire according to limit regulations – past the unsuccessful batter whose turn it is at the home base, or if the batter hits four “foul balls,” that is, hits balls that go outside of the two regulated limits of the diamond that converge on home base.

Bat and ball games are recorded as early as the mid-18th century. Baseball as we know it was once thought to have been invented in 1839 by Abner Doubleday in Cooperstown, N.Y. (where the Baseball Hall of Fame was founded in 1936), but it is more likely that baseball developed from an 18th-century English game called rounders that was modified by Alexander Cartwright. The first professional association was formed in 1871; in 1876 it became the National League. Its rival, the American League, was founded in 1900, and since 1903 (except in 1904 and 1994) the winning teams of each US league have played a postseason championship known as the World Series. Professional baseball leagues also exist in several Latin American countries, the Caribbean, and Asia.

Baseball contributed to breaking down US racial, gender, and labor restrictions.

Baseball terms and phrases, such as “He threw me a curve,” “Her presentation covered all the bases,” “Three times and you’re out!,” “getting to home base,” and “He’s really out in left field,” soon became part of the national vocabulary, so entrenched is baseball in the ordinary conversation of Americans. “Take Me Out to the Ballgame” (1908) remains a much loved American song, and games are a great opportunity to relax with friends and family.

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GIST: Baseball, what a great game! You've got tickets for fantastic seats for a season finale. You're so excited! Oh, no! Your favorite foreign friends just texted you to say that they are coming thousands of miles to visit you...ON THE DAY OF THE GAME! You can't miss the game, but you want to see them, too, so get them tickets, but they don't know anything about baseball. Refresh your mind about how the field is laid out and how the game is played, so you can help them enjoy the day, together. **WRITE** these significant words on a separate piece of paper. **SKIM READ** the text **QUICKLY** to **FIND** them. **MAKE** a **MARK** next to the words on your piece of paper for **EACH TIME** you find them, **COUNT** the marks for **EACH**, then **CLICK** and **CHOOSE** the correct answers. **WATCH OUT!** Star has included AT LEAST one word NOT in the text, or it's too easy! ☺

MAXIMUM TIME: 5 minutes



four/4 _____ World League _____ nine/9 _____ N.Y. _____



DETAILED for CONTENT: Great, that helped a bit. Now refresh your memory even more. **SCAN READ** the questions twice, then **SCAN READ** the text twice, then – **WITHOUT** looking back at the text – **CLICK** on the correct **TRUE / FALSE** answers. The questions are purposefully very general. If you need to look at the text, again, to be **SURE** of your answer, **IT'S OK** – just remember for which ones you needed to do it, and we'll see them, together. **HINTS:** the questions don't always have the same wording as in the text, or it's too easy, and **REMEMBER** to answer based on the information

IN THE TEXT. ☺ When you're done, click FINISH. **MAXIMUM TIME:** 10-15 minutes.

1. American baseball probably evolved out of a Caribbean game. **TRUE / FALSE**
2. One of the specific goals of baseball is to confront social problems. **TRUE / FALSE**
3. Different kinds of balls are used in professional and amateur games. **TRUE / FALSE**
4. Two teams alternate being up to bat and being in the field. **TRUE / FALSE**
5. The fielding team can put the batting team out in various ways. **TRUE / FALSE**
6. The fielding team tries to score as many runs as it can. **TRUE / FALSE**
7. Bases are places where runners can't be tagged out. **TRUE / FALSE**
8. Both the diamond and the field are regulated in size. **TRUE / FALSE**

(All the images are Microsoft Clipart available in the Word program used to create this file.)