



Babe Ruth Softball Divisions Facilities Planning Guide

Field Layout
Checklist
General Considerations
Tournament Considerations

Field Layouts

BABE RUTH SOFTBALL (ages 5-18)

Recommended Area

Ground space is 1.2 acres minimum

Dimensions — Minimum recommendations

Baselines: 60 feet

Pitching distance: 40 feet for 12U; 35 feet for 10U

Distance down foul line: 200 feet

Outfield distance to pocket in center field: 200 feet

Backstop: Distance: Minimum of 25 feet from home plate and the foul lines extending from home plate edge to first and third base dugouts; Height: 24 feet with five foot overhang

Side fencing: Distance: Minimum of 30 feet from foul lines from home plate to the foul pole. Tapering from third base to the foul pole is permitted. Height: 4 feet minimum

Height of back field fence: 4 feet minimum with appropriate covering

Protective fence in front of dugouts: 6 feet high

Orientation

Optimum orientation is to locate home plate so that the pitcher is throwing across the sun and the batter is not facing it. The line from home plate through the pitcher's mound and second base should run east-northeast.

Surface and Drainage

Infield — Infield should be skinned. A dirt, clay and sand mixture surface for the infield is easy to maintain and durable. The infield should be graded so that the base lines and home plate are level.

Outfield — Outfields should be grass with a proper irrigation system. Preventative maintenance should be used to minimize wear spots. A scheduled annual resodding of these areas is recommended. Irrigation systems should be properly monitored to prevent man-induced wet spots. A three percent grade should be constructed through the turf areas to move the water.

Recommended Safety Features

Warning tracks — A warning track of at least three running steps (approximately 10 feet) should be planned near each fence. The change in surfaces will warn the fielder she is approaching the fence and is a definite safety feature for the ball park.

The material used is not as critical as that used in the infield. A crushed rock mix that will absorb water is most appropriate — generally the same substance as used around the parking lot, walkways, etc. It is critical, for maintenance purposes, that your infield and warning track substances be kept separate.

Foul poles — should be at least six feet above the outfield fence.

Batter's eye — should be placed in dead centerfield approximately 24 feet wide to provide a field of contrast for the white ball allowing hitters to better see pitched balls.

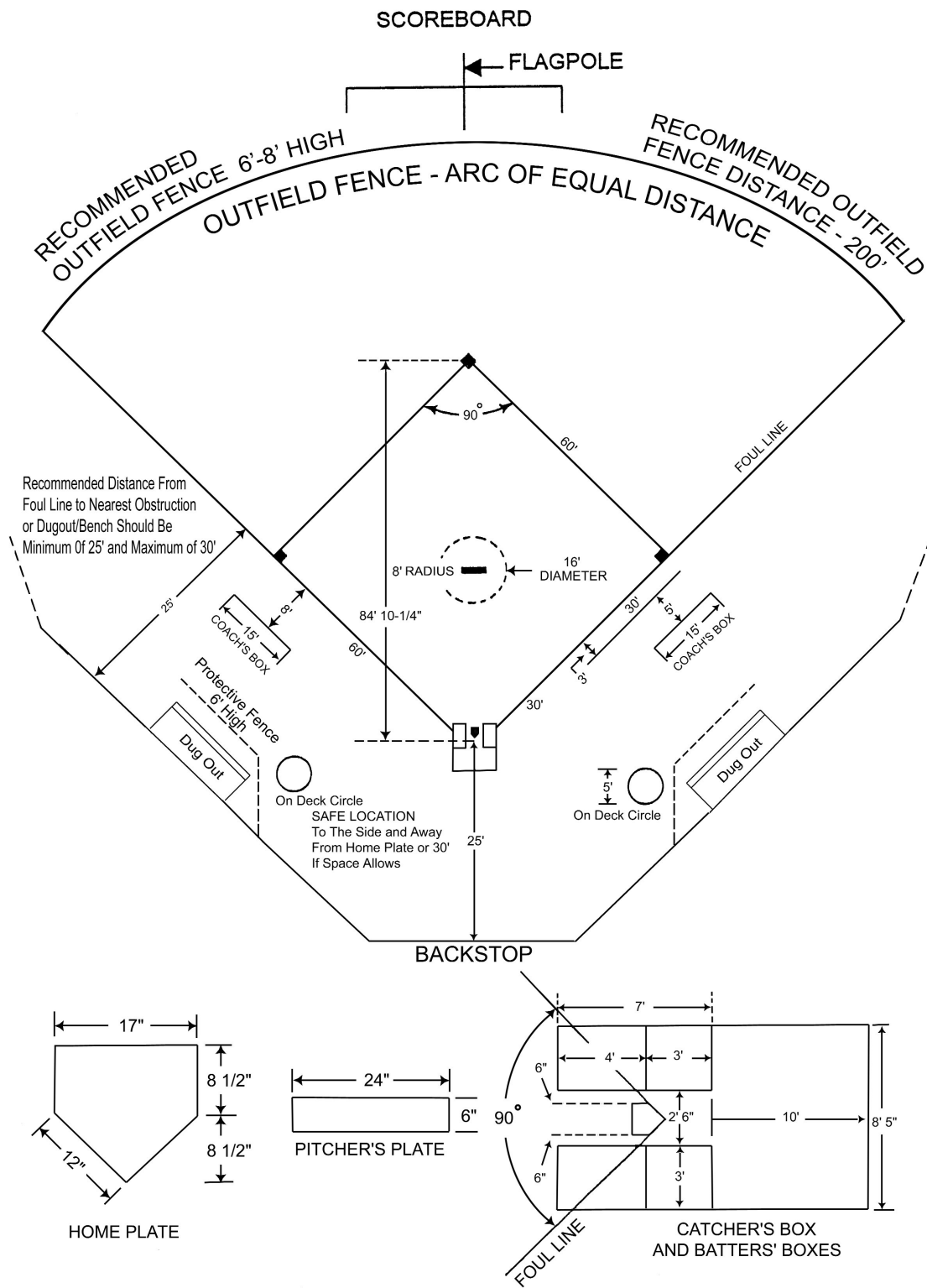
Pitcher's eye — six to eight feet tall behind home plate, allows fielders to better pick up the ball coming off the bat. It also helps avoid pitchers becoming distracted by people behind the fence.

Dugout — installing a roof and protective screening in front of the dugout reduces risk of injuries from foul balls.

Backstop overhead and side screens — protects spectators from being hit by foul balls.

Fencing — enclose the top rail of chain link fencing with PVC drainage tile or similar product and install fence caps to reduce risk of abrasions.

BABE RUTH SOFTBALL (ages 5-18)



Measuring Arc for Skinned Infield

Measure a 60-foot arc from the *front center* of a pitching rubber which has been placed *46-feet* from the apex of home plate.

General Facility Considerations

Parking

Capacity — 1 parking space per 3 seats

Parking Surface — should meet local code

Handicapped Accessibility — parking closest to and accessibility to facility entrance

Bus Spaces — within reasonable walking distance

Ticket Window

1 per 1,500 seats

Rest Room Ratios

1 location per sex

1 stall per 80 women

1 stall per 350 men

1 urinal per 100 men

Lavatory Ratios

1 per 150 women

1 per 250 men

Handicapped Accessibility

Meet local, state, and federal code

Adequate accessibility per sex

Drinking Fountains

Meet local, state and federal code

Public Telephones

Meet local, state, federal code

Seating

Handicapped accessibility in each type of seating (box, reserved, general admission)

Meet local, state, and federal building codes

Concessions

1-2 locations per 1,500 seats

1 serving station per 350 seats

Meet local, state, and federal code

Souvenir area

1 per 1,500 attendance

Sound system

Acoustically balanced for capacity and seating arrangements

General Facility Considerations

Press/Score Booth

Accommodate scorer, public address announcer, scoreboard operator

Baseball Playing Field

Tarps: Circle cover for pitcher's mound; covers for plate area; base area covers or infield cover

Softball Playing Field

Tarps: Infield cover

Facility Checklist*

To ensure the safety of participants and spectators, each facility should be checked prior to each use

On Field

- Surfaces — proper grading; no holes; check for high/low spots
- Bases — properly secured posts; no holes; bottom of home plate flat on playing surface
- Fencing — bottom rail or properly buried; no holes or breaks; properly covered
- Dugouts — screened; roofed; bat and helmet racks installed and secured
- Pitcher's mound — proper height and grading; no holes
- Backstop — base properly buried; no holes or breaks
- Warning track — minimum 10 feet from fence; no holes; no large rocks

Off Field

Concession stand

- In compliance with local/state/federal codes
- Appliances in working order
- CO₂ tanks secured
- Smoke alarms/fire extinguishers working
- Barbeque grills located away from exits
- Barbeque grills propane tanks inspected
- Cleaners/chemicals stored away from foods
- Boxes stored on shelves — off the floor and out of walkways
- Customer doors or windows checked for safety
- Pricing signs correct
- Well stocked
- Breaker boxes locked and grounded
- Signage posted for proper emergency first aid in prominent area
- Emergency phone numbers posted in prominent area

Bleachers

All bleachers

- In compliance with local/state/federal codes
- Vertical opening between guardrails, footboards and seatboards should not exceed four inches
- Cross bracing and footings on fixed bleachers should not “move”
- Painting a 1"-2" contrasting color across the nose thread of each step will help the view of the steps for people coming down

Aluminum

- New bleachers must meet ASTM Guidelines
- Electrically grounded
- End caps checked
- Hand and back rails checked
- Protective fencing along back and sides

Facility Checklist*

Wood

- Rotted and splintered wood replaced — Besides a visual inspection, any wood that can be easily entered with a pointed object such as an ice pick, screw driver or pen-knife is suspect and should be cause for immediate repair
- Single board bleachers should be no higher than six feet

Other

- First aid kits stocked
- Public address system working
- Rest rooms — cleaned, stocked and in working order
- Scoreboard — in working order; properly grounded and locked

Lighting — see page 17

Tournament preparation — see page 25

Closing for the season

- Water pipes drained
- Sprinkler system properly winterized
- Concession stand — perishable goods removed; winterized

* Installation of all equipment must meet manufacturers' requirements

Tournament Considerations

This checklist contains facility items that should be considered when hosting a tournament. Like the rest of the information in this booklet, these items are intended to provide a starting point from which to develop your facility appropriate to your individual needs.

- Field layout (See pages 5-12)
- Facility must meet ADA (Americans for Disability Act) guidelines
- Spectator Seating — Estimate spectators for tournaments:
District: 500; State: 1,000; Regional: 1,500; World Series 3,000
- Rest Rooms — Adequate rest rooms for expected spectators and participants
- Concession Stand — Easy, convenient access to spectators and participants. Safety considerations include, but are not limited to, overhead protection from foul balls for customers, barbeque grills away from exits, restraints on CO₂ tanks.
- Lights — Should meet minimum Babe Ruth League guidelines of 50/30 footcandles.
- Scoreboard — Recommended location is behind left or right center field. Score and the inning should be clearly displayed. Balls, strikes, hits and errors are optional.
- Parking — One parking space per 3-4 spectators is recommended. Safety for participants and spectators should be the number one priority when considering parking facilities and traffic flow.
- Public address system
- Telephones — At least one public telephone should be available
- Flag pole(s)
- First aid kits
- Press/Score Box/Area — Adequate space for minimum personnel of announcer, scorekeeper, scoreboard operator
- Can area be secured for collecting tickets or gate fee?