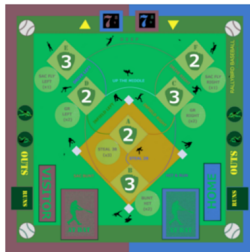


# RALLYBIRD BASEBALL

## THE EQUIPMENT

### THE GAME BOARD

Note the diamond's bases for runner pawns and the six zones for the Glove tiles.



### 7 GLOVE TILES



Black & white gloves on the front side, Black & red on the back. Two tiles have asterisks.

### 2 DICE



Two six-sided dice produce a beautiful bell curve of results, with 7 the most likely result, 6 and 8 the next most likely, and so on.

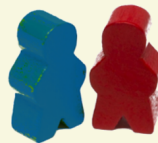
### 1 RALLY BIRD TILE



Hooray for the Rally Bird!

The Rally Bird is an optional rule that allows the underdog in the 9th inning an extra bit of luck.

### 8 BASERUNNERS



Four each.

### 2 YELLOW "OUT" DISKS



On the third out, batters take the field.



### 16 AT BAT CARDS



These include a simplified board diagram with Glove field zones labeled A-F. Below the field, the cards list possible results that compare Gloves and dice (explained later).



### 11 RUN TILES

These provide a quick way to keep track of runs if you don't want to write it on a traditional score grid.

### 5 TWO-SIDED INNING TILES



Slide the tile from left to right spot as you move through the inning.

# HOW TO PLAY RALLYBIRD BASEBALL

## SETUP

Position the game board so that each player sits near their HOME or VISITOR dugout. Place the red and blue runner pawns on their dugout. VISITOR starts as offense at the top of the inning. *For your first learning game, remove the At Bat card "Take the Pitch".*

## EACH HALF INNING

Offense takes all the At Bat cards, and randomly discards one. Offense may look at this discard, then tuck it face down under the edge of the board. Offense has 16 At Bat cards in hand to use *(15 for your first learning game)*.

Defense takes the 7 Glove tiles. There are 2 Glove tiles with an asterisk. Defense must choose one of them to discard, then use the remaining 6 that half inning. Important: At the beginning of each inning, Defense starts out using the white numbered side of each tile, never the red numbered side.



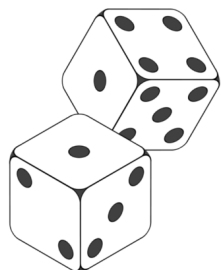
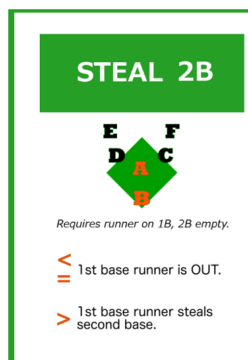
## GAMEPLAY – EACH “AT BAT”

1. Offense decides first. Offense secretly selects one of the 15 At Bat cards, and places it face down in the team’s spot between the dugout and home place.
2. Now Defense must decide. Defense considers how to distribute Glove strength and places the 6 Glove tiles accordingly into their 6 zones on the board.
3. Offense reveals the chosen At Bat card.
4. Both players determine which one or two Glove values apply. Announce their sum aloud.

Offense rolls the 2 six-sided dice.

Both players resolve the result of the dice sum against the appropriate “less than”, “equal to”, or “greater than” results on the At Bat card.

Is the dice sum  $<$ ,  $=$ , or  $>$  than the Glove sum? Announce the result. Offense moves (or removes) the runners on the field accordingly. As needed, Offense places yellow OUT disk(s) on one of the umpires printed on the board.



$<$

$=$

$>$



A



B

5. If Offense succeeds in moving the batter or a runner forward, Defense must make a change to one of the two Glove tiles involved in that play:

a) If the Glove tiles involved in the play show a white numbered side, as it always will at the start of the half inning, Defense must choose one of them and flip it to its red side.



That flipped tile remains on its red numbered side for the rest of the half inning, unless... (see b).

b) If one of those Glove tiles involved in the play show a red numbered side, Defense must remove it from the inning. If they are both red numbered, Defense must choose one to remove; the other remains...for now.

c) Defense will often have less than a full complement of 6 Glove tiles to use. If a Glove zone without a tile applies to the judgment of an At Bat's success or failure, use the Glove value for a zone printed on the board. Defense may lose multiple Glove tiles in an inning. Exception: Defense's last tile as a red numbered glove is immune from removal.

d) Remember that if Offense did not succeed in moving a batter or runner in a play, Defense does not flip or remove any Glove tiles.

6. Defense removes the current Glove tiles from the board after each At Bat resolution. Offense takes the played At Bat card back into hand and may use it again. Until there are 3 outs, repeat the steps above: Offense selects and puts the At Bat card facedown, Defense places the Glove tiles, then resolve the card's action.

Apply standard baseball rules: after 3 outs, the half inning is over. Offense and Defense switch sides. Defense's Gloves always begin a half inning fresh: follow the simple Setup process again as described above.

## SCORE

For a game session that lasts about an hour, start your play at the top of the 7th inning with the score 0-0. The game's black INNING tiles help you keep track.

Of course, if the Home team leads when you reach the bottom of the 9th, the game is over. Play another!

You can use the blue SCORE tiles to keep track of the runs, or use a traditional scoring method on paper. You could of course play a full 9-inning game if you wish. Enjoy with high spirits. You can find the optional RallyBird rule on the next page. Play ball!



**A GAME BY PETER GELMAN**

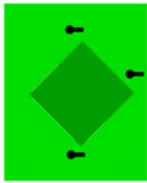
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# AT BAT EXAMPLE...

Field situation



If the dice result was...



If the Glove tiles on the board at zones D and A were...



Offense selected this At Bat card

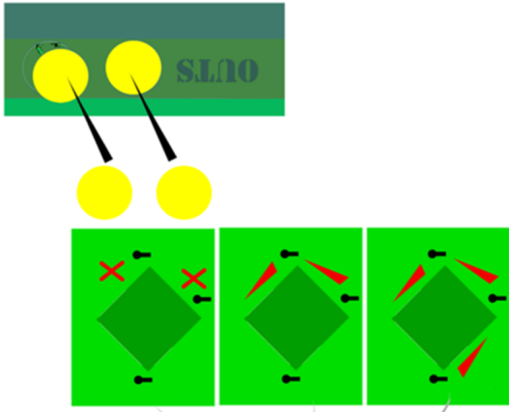
## INFIELD LEFT

< Batter OUT. Double-Play if runner on 1st base.  
Batter reaches 1st base. Runners advance if forced.

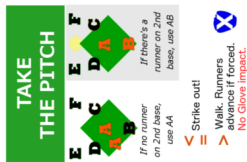
= Batter reaches 1st base. Runners advance 1st base.

> Batter reaches 1st base. Runners advance one base.

Play action is...



## Advanced Rule: Take the Pitch



This At Bat card differs from the other cards in two ways.

- 1) It tests one of two different Glove zones according to base runner situations.
- 2) It never impacts Defense's Glove zone tile, even if it succeeds in advancing the batter with a Walk.

## Optional Rule: Snake Eyed Walks

When the At Bat die roll = 2, the result is automatically a Walk. Batter takes 1st base. Runners advance if forced.



## Optional Rule: 9th Inning Rallybird Power

Before you start, if both players agree, you may add the Rallybird rule to the game. The Rallybird rule may add 1/2 hour of drama to the length of the game.

The Rallybird tile offers a special power to any losing team at bat in the 9th inning only. If you don't like your die roll result, use the Rallybird tile to roll again. If you then succeed in advancing a runner, keep the Rallybird to use again. However, the instant your Rallybird re-roll fails to advance a runner, or the instant you take the lead, you may not use the Rallybird any more.

## More examples...

- Grounder Right: glove zones "C" means look at the Glove tile number in the C zone on the board and double it.
- Sac Left: glove zone "E" means look at the Glove tile number in the E zone and use it by itself against the dice sum.
- Steal 3B: glove zones "A A" means look at the Glove tile number in the A zone and triple it.
- Home Run: Batter must successfully roll against Glove Zones E & F... and then do it again a second time.

## Baseball Logic Examples

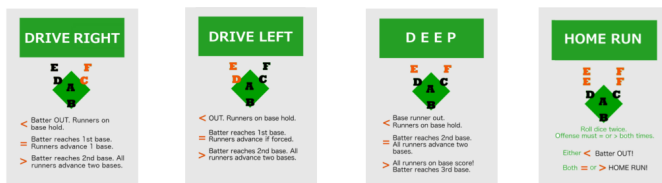
**Infield Right/Left, Grounder Right/Left, Bunt Hit**  
 What happens in a Double Play with no Outs if there are also runners on 2B and/or 3B? A runner on 2B must advance, forcing a runner on 3B to score. If there's no runner on 2B, a runner on 3B stays. For **Sac Right/Left** in this situation, runners on 2B and/or 3B must hold.

## Rallybird Baseball Tactics—A Beginner's Guide

Do you feel uncertain about which At Bat card to play for each situation? To some extent, that's natural, because generally all choices have a chance of success and failure. Also, fans disagree with each other about coach decisions all the time.

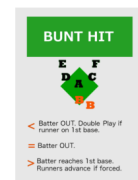
All the At Bat tactics have a value in themselves and in keeping the defense's Glove zone defense off balance. If you have one favorite tactic for a certain situation, the Defense will soon figure it out and place the highest value Gloves in the relevant zones. Happily, even if Defense guesses right, your At Bat still has at least a chance to succeed. Finally, this is a board game so your priority should be to have fun with your choices.

### DEEP, DRIVE RIGHT, DRIVE LEFT, HOME RUN

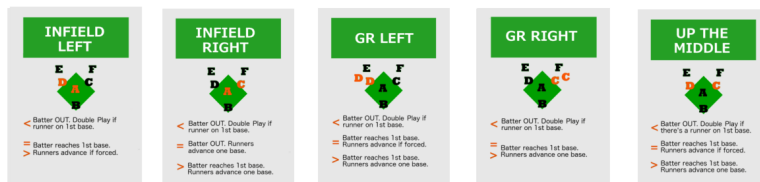


More ambitious hits over the course of a game help you directly by offering base-clearing scores and two and three base hits. They help you indirectly by reminding the defense of your outfield threat, even if you most of the time offer less ambitious hits. Don't neglect the Home Run! Even when you don't succeed, it unsettles the Defense, and supports your other At Bat efforts. And when it does succeed, you can push the wooden batter around the diamond, back to the dugout to high-five the teammates.

**BUNT FOR HIT** Include this in your offensive plan to keep Defense on edge and unsure of relying on a "B" Glove zone. A hit is a hit, even if it's a bunt hit. **Note that the "=" result is an Out!**



### INFIELD LEFT, INFIELD RIGHT, GR LEFT, GR RIGHT, UP THE MIDDLE



**Infield Right:** Note that the "=" result is an Out that advances other runners, an unintentional sacrifice.

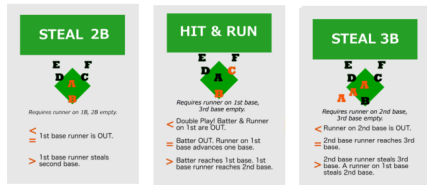
All offer good single base hits and base advancement in the essential small ball manner. You can avoid the double play possibility if you chose this with no runner on first base.

The base diamond is not symmetrical in all senses. Runners move only counter-clockwise. This impacts some results a little unevenly. **Compare the left and right details of these hits.**

Compared to Infield Left and Grounder Left, Infield Right and Grounder Right are just slightly better at advancing a runner from first base to second. This is because it's harder for the second basemen covering the right side to throw to the shortstop covering 2nd base as the first base runner is in the way, and charging! **Note where runners require a force to advance, and in which results they advance regardless of runners pushing behind them.**

## Rallybird Tactics Beginner's Guide, continued...

### STEAL 2B, HIT & RUN, STEAL 3B

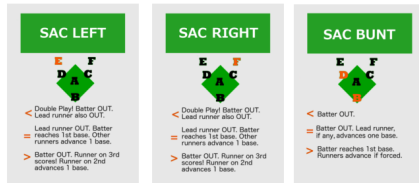


Theft of second base does more than advance a runner. It frees up the double play threat.

Hit & Run tries to accomplish the same thing a different way. Both make Defense nervous!

You can steal third base, but it's difficult due to the "3x" (3-times "A" glove value) unless you catch the Defense in surprise. With a runner on first and second base, a successful double steal is a delicious possibility.

### SAC LEFT, SAC RIGHT, SAC BUNT



A sure Out is a heavy trade for runner advancement. But if you have runners in scoring position (at second or third base), with less than two Outs, it offers reasonably good odds to succeed. The cost does not feel as heavy when you succeed in moving a base runner from 3rd base to home plate.

### TAKE THE PITCH

A batter-pitcher duel is something like a fencing match. A Walk is as good as a Single for Offense. Imposing this duel on Defense highlights the concentrated value of the Pitcher. It helps remind Defense of the impossible need to be strong everywhere. This in turn opens up possibilities for your other At Bat choices.



A runner on second base may try to see the catcher's signal. Sometimes this runner can discern the way the pitcher grips the ball. Either way, the runner might be able to send a clue to the batter about what pitch is coming. The catcher keeps an eye on this second base spy to protect the pitcher.



### Your Defense & the Glove Zones

Can you guess what Offense wants to do? You have some clues from your opponent's personality, past behavior, and field situation. If Offense has 2 outs, you can rationally rule out all the Sac (Sacrifice) options. It's important to keep Offense guessing where you put your weakest Glove values. If you think you can guess where Offense is going to try to hit the ball, it might be worth the risk of putting your strongest Gloves there. Remember, Offense is trying to out-guess you at the same time. It's not possible to have a completely even defense everywhere.

Sometimes players put their strongest Glove values in E and F for every At Bat. This is understandable, but the opponent can put players on base by less ambitious hits too. If nothing worse, keep in mind that the dice seem fickle, but over the course of many rolls, it tends to average out. Sometimes, even when you as Defense guess wrong and Offense hits right where your weakness is, the dice will help you get that Out! If events go the other way, my hope is that the short game will maximize the fun and minimize the pain, while allowing you to become intrigued by the tactical possibilities and the drama!

## Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

### Q. Do you recommend the Advanced and Optional Rules?

Yes, I always prefer to play with the "Take the Pitch" At Bat card and the optional Rallybird rule. I don't consider "Take the Pitch" optional. It's just a little more complicated for beginners who haven't absorbed the basic game concepts. "Snake Eyed Walks" hurts defense a little. I like a stronger defensive contest, but welcome it if my opponent requests. I also like it unsymmetrically as an advantage I can give to my young opponents, or an advantage the loser receives after the first game of a double-header.

### Q. What does 1X, 2X, 3X mean?

A: If Offense selects that play, the 1x, 2x, 3x is the multiplier you use when determining the Glove defense number. So if Offense chooses Grounder Right (which the board shows at the "C" Glove position as 2x) it means multiply the Glove tile there by two. That gives you the sum that Offense needs to roll against. Note that the At Bat card for Grounder Right shows the same thing in a different way. It shows "C C" in red, meaning double the C Glove tile value. When stealing third base, Offense must roll against 3-times the "A" glove value. When hitting a Sac Fly left or right, Offense must roll the two dice against just the respective Glove Zone, E or F, by itself. It's the better odds of success the batter receives for trading a long fly Out to advance a runner.

### Q. What does "Sac" and "GR" mean?

A: Sac stands for "Sacrifice". When there's a runner on base, and zero or one out, the batter hits the ball in a way that is likely to put him Out, but also likely to advance the lead runner. GR stands for "Grounder" or "Ground Ball". These cannot be caught for an Out. The fielder must throw the runner out at the chosen base.

### Q. The At Bat card for Home Run is a little different. What does it mean?

A: It means Offense needs to successfully roll against the sum of E & F Glove tiles not once as normal, but twice. If one or both of these two die roll attempts against the sum of E & F fail, the batter is Out. To put it another way, it is like attempting to use the "DEEP" At Bat card twice in order to go farther and make it a home run. You have to succeed with a regular 2-dice At Bat die roll both times or it's an Out.

### Q: I like baseball but don't understand the tactics. What should I do?

A: Please try to enjoy learning. Experiment with different tactics. Because 3 innings of Rallybird baseball can take less than an hour, it's easier to accept the give and take of learning with luck and mistakes pushing and pulling you along. Just because something didn't work doesn't mean you didn't make a good call. Remember to enjoy yourself. If your opponent knows more about baseball, ask questions, then make up your own mind! Please see the Rallybird Tactics Beginner's Guide on the previous pages. It offers some ideas for you to consider.

## Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ), continued...

### **Q: What do the Glove tiles represent in real baseball?**

**A: Rallybird Baseball** combines baseball elements to try to make a board game with meaningful decisions that is also light and quick to play. To accomplish that I combined the sense of defensive player position and ability and also the general pitching strategy. Coaches use ground ball pitchers to try to set up a double play, for example. Strong infield Glove tiles at D and C could represent that, at the cost of weaker tiles in the outfield as Defense does not expect a deep hit.

Glove tiles in part represent the modern use of the Shift. I recently saw a professional game where Defense brought four infielders into the diamond. The same game saw four infielders crowded in a line between first and second base, leaving the traditional short stop area wide open. The outfielders also crowded from center to right. In Rallybird Baseball board game terms, the strongest Glove tiles stood at F and C, the weakest at E and D. The Glove tiles also represent the pitcher's side of the batter-pitcher duel.

Glove tiles flip and change value to reflect players' determination, the coach's recalibrations and substitutions, even crowd emotion. Quick Outs are essential for Defense as team momentum can suddenly shut down in response to Offensive success. If things keep going wrong, morale plummets, confusion intrudes, players fail basic skills, and the coach starts pulling out his remaining hair while trying get out of the inning.

Defense's choice at the beginning of each inning between the two Glove tiles with an asterisk reflects a coach's approach: aggressive but more fragile (white 5, red 4) or a more conservative approach with deeper depth of long term strength (white 4, red 6).

### **Q: Why does Defense put down the tiles after Offense selects the At Bat card? In real baseball, the batter can see where the fielders stand.**

**A:** True, but saavy guesswork is part of real baseball. Batters have about half a second for a ball to travel from pitcher's mound to travel 60 feet 6 inches to cross home plate. In that half a second, the batter wants to determine its course of flight. They even try to see the position of the stitching as it leaves the pitcher's hand as a clue to the type of pitch. Will it fly straight? Will it curve? Is it going full speed, or is this a slower one? Will it cross home plate high or low, inside or outside? It all helps determine what the batter can accomplish and what kind of hit the swing might be.. To make this an easy to play 1-hour board game for 3 innings, I combined this guesswork factor as part of the Glove defensive values. As I mentioned above, some pitchers know how to throw a type of pitch that encourages an unproductive hit, a weak ground ball or short pop fly. For all these reasons, Glove zone values include the pitcher as a factor.

### **Q: Is the Rallybird a real thing?**

**A:** Yes. I've seen it myself more than once. Baseball is notorious for its fun superstitions, such as wearing one's cap upside down for luck. Fans and players of a losing team notice a bird or birds on the field, and suddenly the rally begins.

You might enjoy our instructional video posted on YouTube!