

# Keeping Score Baseball

By Matt Murphy

## Introduction

Keeping score in baseball is an art. There are many ways to do it, some more complex than others. It all depends on what you want to get as an end result. If you are on one end of the spectrum and want to be able to produce all kinds of statistics from the scoring sheet, then you are “hard core”. If you are on the other end of the spectrum and your biggest desire is to ensure the lineup and score are correct, then you are “soft core”. This guide to scoring is intended to be somewhere in the middle. No matter which way you choose to go, enjoy it and have fun.

This information was created as a friendly tutorial for those wanting to learn the art of scoring a baseball game. It is geared to the beginner to the intermediate scorekeeper. If you are asked, or want to score in a tournament game, please be sure to discuss you experience with the tournament director to ensure you keep the book in the manner desired by that tournament.

If you have any questions you are welcome to e-mail the author at [MDMASoft@aol.com](mailto:MDMASoft@aol.com).

There are many computer programs available to score baseball games. The problem with these is our ability to carry a computer to a ball field. There are also programs for Palm Pilots. Some of the programs I am familiar with will be listed at the end of this document.

## Positions

There are 9 fielding positions in baseball. In softball and some young levels of baseball there are 10. The positions are represented numerically. They are as follows:



- 1 – Pitcher
- 2 – Catcher
- 3 – First Base
- 4 – Second Base
- 5 – Third Base
- 6 – Shortstop
- 10 – Short Fielder (softball)
- 7 – Left Field
- 8 – Center Field
- 9 – Right Field

If your league uses a designated hitter, that position gets represented with DH.

### Notations

Symbols used for various baseball plays are as follows:

(The slashes listed on the single, double, triple and homerun can be also commonly noted as horizontal lines. Unfortunately my word processor does not support their representation very well. The strikeout looking is a backwards K.)

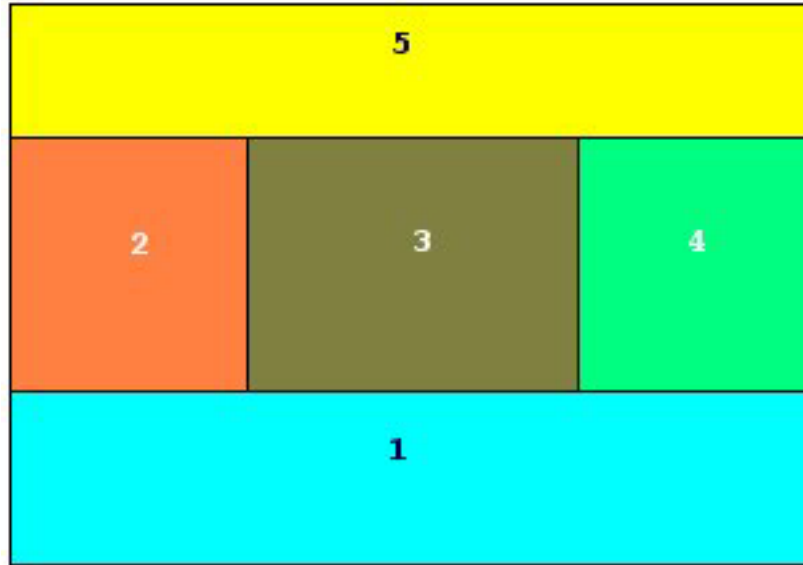
Single:	S or / or 1B	Passed Ball:	PB
Double:	D or // or 2B	Stolen Base:	SB
Triple:	T or /// or 3B	Double Play:	DP
Homerun:	HR or ////	Error:	E
Sacrifice:	SH or Sac	Sacrifice Fly:	SF
Walk:	BB or W	Sacrifice Bunt:	SB
Strikeout Swinging:	K or Ks	Intentional Walk:	IBB or IW
Strikeout Looking:	(see note above) or Kc	Foul Out:	FO
Balk:	BK	Force Out:	FO
Fielder's Choice:	FC	Line Drive:	L
Hit by Pitch:	HP or HBP	Bunt:	B
Wild Pitch:	WP	Unassisted:	U
Fly Out:	F	Caught Stealing:	CS
Infield Fly:	IF	Dropped Third Strike:	DTS
Ground Rule Double:	GRD	Catcher's Interference:	CI

Yes, there is a conflict between force out and foul out. It's your choice. I personally use FO for foul out. I don't use a force out, as it is self-explanatory after we get into some sample notations.

## Scorecards

In order to score a baseball game you will need a scoring sheet. Your league may give your team a scorebook. Scorebooks can be purchased at any sporting goods store. There are several templates available on the Internet for download and printing. If you elect to use software, please refer to the programs documentation. Some samples have been provided near the end of this document.

All scorebooks and score cards will not present the scoring sheet(s) in the same manner. Some publishers are better than others. I have my preference, but you really need to score a game or two to become familiar with them and see what works for you. There are usually 5 basic sections:



Note: It may be able to follow the sections explanation if you turn to, and refer to the sample scoring sheets later on in this document.

- **Section 1** -- This area usually comprised to two horizontal sections. The top part is usually space reserved for totaling the columns of the innings/games activity. The bottom part is usually reserved for pitching statistics and totals.
- **Section 2** -- This area is usually the lineup.
- **Section 3** -- This area is usually made up of squares. The horizontal row, each square represents a batter or turn at bat. The columns represent the innings. Each box usually has a diamond shape. Some may indicate this diamond shape with 4 points or some other object. This diamond shape represents the baselines.
- **Section 4** -- This area is usually reserved for totaling the batters statistics.
- **Section 5** -- Last, but certainly not least, this area of the score sheet usually is reserved for information about the game. Who is playing, who is visitor, who is home, the umpires, date, time field, weather, scorer etc.

## Pre-Game

Depending on your level of baseball, the managers will usually exchange lineup cards before a game. The scorer needs to get copies of these and enter the lineup in the book. Substitute players are usually listed below the starting lineup.

You should introduce yourself to the other teams scorekeeper. You may want to introduce yourself to the umpires working the game, but that really depends on the level of baseball, and whether or not it is a recreational game.

## Enter the Game Information.

Fill out the top section of the scorebook, the one referenced earlier as section 5. This should include, but is not limited to, the visiting team, the home team, the field, the umpires, etc. If you are scoring a tournament game, please be sure to check with the tournament director for any specific tournament requirements.

## Enter the Lineup


The lineup section will be several lines. Represented here is one player or positions space. The top line is where the starting player's name is listed. The bottom line is reserved for a substitute player.

The left hand box (blue) on each line is where you enter the player's uniform number. The middle box (green) on each line is where you enter the player's name. The right hand box (yellow) on each line is where you enter the player's position. Some scorekeepers enter this information numerically and some use abbreviations for positions, such as 1B, CF, 3B etc. My personal preference is to have this information entered numerically.

The home book is the "official" scorebook. If there are any disputes, the home book is the score sheet of record for the game. This is why it is important to know your fellow scorekeeper.

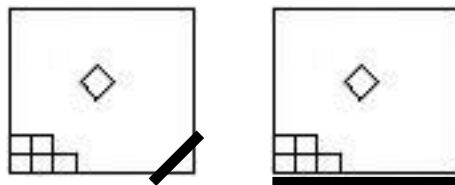
## Scoring

The scoring area noted earlier as being part of section 3 of a score sheet is made up of boxes. Each box represents a batter. In this section of the tutorial, these squares will be referred to as boxes.

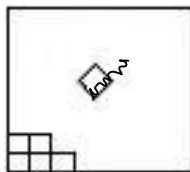
Note: Be sure to start each inning in the correct box.

Each scorekeeper has their own way of annotating the scorebook. Earlier in this document there is a table that represented the most common annotations used. There are a few other symbols you will want to use:

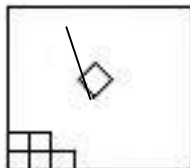
- **The end of an inning** – This is usually noted by drawing a small diagonal slash in the bottom right corner of the last batters box. Some scorers choose to draw a horizontal line on the bottom of the last batters box.



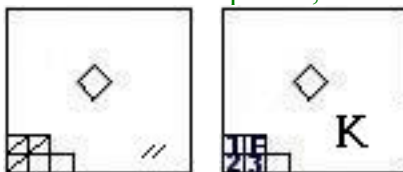
- **A ground ball** – noted as a bumpy line. (Many people do not differentiate between a fly ball and a ground ball. A bumpy line would be for more advanced scorekeepers.) Balls hit are always drawn from the home plate area of the inside diamond in the batter's box to the point where it is fielded.



- **A fly ball** – a straight or curved line drawn from home plate to the place the ball was fielded.

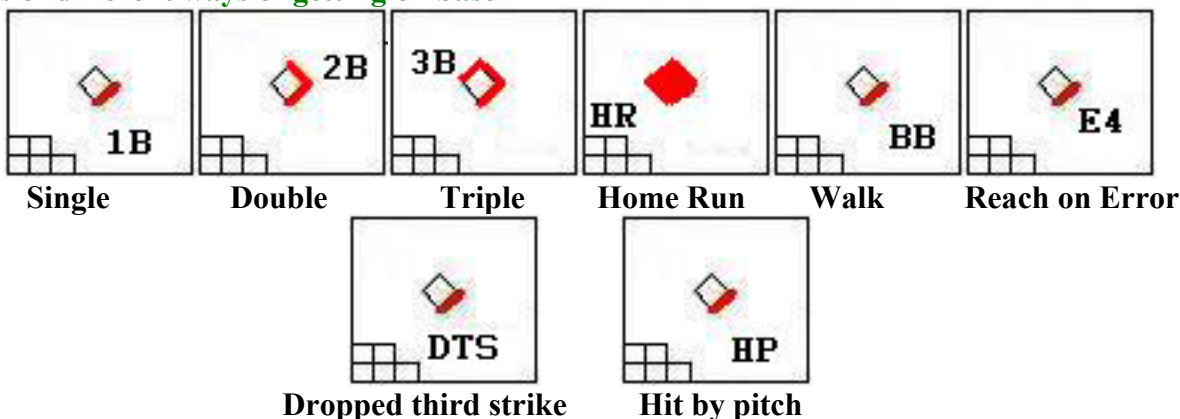


- **Notate each pitch** – Depending on the level of baseball you are scoring, and the level of detail you want from the score sheet will dictate how you note each pitch. Most scorebooks has small squares within the batter's box. There will be 3 with B's in them and 2 with S's for Balls and Strikes.
  - **Easiest, least amount of work** – simple put a diagonal line through the small strike or ball square that is within the batter's box. For a ball that is hit in play you do not cross out one of these Ball/Strike squares.
  - **Medium** – for people interested in doing pitch counts, note all foul balls after 2 strikes have been recorded. You can do this with dots, dashes or small slashes somewhere in a free area within the batter's box.
  - **Hardcore** – Note the pitches in numerical sequence, including foul balls.



The left hand box shows the easier method. There was a 1 ball 2 strike count, with the batter having fouled two other pitches off, for a total of 5 pitches. The right hand box shows a “hardcore” strikeout. The first pitch was a strike, the second and third balls, the fourth a foul and the fifth, a strike swinging.

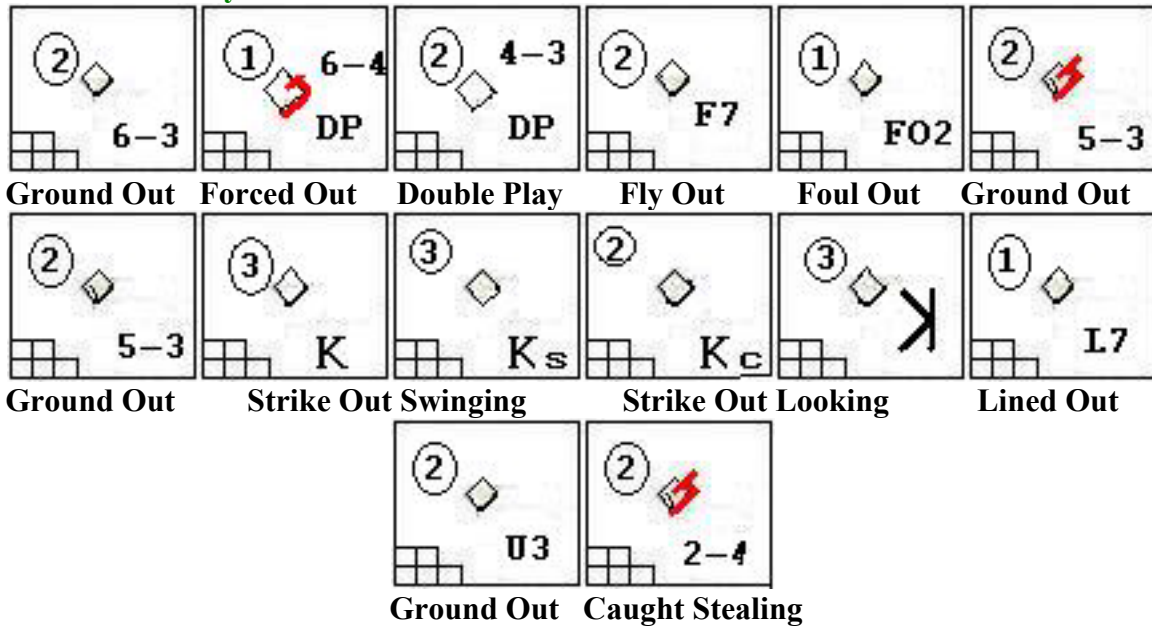
### Samples of different ways of getting on base



As you may have noticed, highlighted in red, is a line drawn over the line on the inside diamond. This indicates how far the runner went on the base paths. It's highlighted in red here for visual clarify. In the next section, samples of outs, you will note a line that crosses a base path. This is where the runner made or was put out. One is not usually drawn for runners out at first.

You should also note, the positioning of the notation for what the batter did. This is usually written on the side of the diamond where the runner reached base.

### Samples of different ways a batter or runner makes an out



### Substitutions

#	Player	Pos	1	4
8	Schmidt	4	◇ >	
3	Tasker	PH ↑4		◇

Substitution rules vary depending on the level of baseball being played. I am not going to try and cover all the possibilities between Little League and the Majors. I will cover a couple of common substitutions.

You've reached the point in a game where a substitution is made. Some scorebooks divide the Position field into two sections, either with a diagonal or horizontal line. How it is marked in the book depends on how the substitution is made. The top half of the box is usually used to note the type of substitution. The bottom half is usually used to note the inning the substitution took place. An arrow is drawn next to the inning number where the substitution was made to note either the top or bottom of an inning.

- **Pinch Hitter** -- The graphic above shows how a sub enters the game as a pinch hitter. If the batter will take the position in the field as the person they are replacing, then you note the position as the replaced fielding position. In the case above, you would put a "4".
- **Pinch Runner** -- Would be noted as PR.
- **Fielding Change** -- When players move from position to position, this is noted in the "Pos" column as well.
- **Pitching Change** -- If the pitcher bats, then the batting portion of the substitution has been covered above. For the pitching statistics, you draw a line at the bottom of the last batter the pitcher faced. If they pitched to a partial batter, you need to make a special note.

## Post Game

If needed by your game or league, you can have the head umpire sign the score sheet of the home scorebook. The end of the game is when you total all the rows and columns. This can be a tedious process if you haven't kept up with it during the game.

## Statistics

### Common and how they are formulated

#### Batting

1. **Batting Average** - Hits divided by Official At Bats
2. **Slugging Percentage** - Total Bases divided by Number of Official at Bats (OAB)
3. **On Base Average** - Total Times on Base (H + RE + BB + HBP) divided by Total At Bats (OAB + BB + HBP + SF)
4. **Stolen Base Percentage** - SB divided by Attempts

#### Fielding

1. **Fielding Average** - (Total Putouts + Assists) divided by (Total Putouts + Assists + Errors)

#### Fielding

1. **ERA (Earned Run Average)** - (ER \* Innings Per Game) divided by IP

## Scorekeeping Software

There are several programs on the market today that score a baseball game. Some even have Palm Pilot companions, so scoring at the field is made easier. I have personally tried both of the programs listed here. Both are very good. TurboStats is probably more comprehensive, but I choose Baseball Scorebook due to pricing and residual costs. I've been very happy with it. You can download a demo for either program at the listed URL's. If you go to google.com and do a search using the keywords: baseball scoring program, you will find several thousand hits.

**TurboStats** – (also have companion software for the Palm Pilots)

Visit – [HTTP://www.turbostats.com](http://www.turbostats.com)

**Baseball Scorebook** – (also have companion software for the Palm Pilots)

Visit – [HTTP://www.fixedit.com](http://www.fixedit.com)

## Practice Test

The following information was extracted from an actual game. Try taking a score sheet and scoring the game based on the play by play text. Once you have completed it, compare your sheet against the actual scoring sheet from the game.

Avalanche - Top of the 1st:

Buddy Haynie walked, walked forward to 2nd, advanced to 3rd on passed ball, batted forward to home.

Matt Murphy walked, advanced to 2nd on passed ball, batted forward to home.

Mike McMunn struck out looking.

Doug Hudgins struck out swinging.

Alex Novo singled, batted forward to home, 1 RBI.

Adam Foege doubled, 1 RBI.

Randall Bowles struck out swinging.

3 runs, 2 hits, 0 errors, 1 LOB.

Gordon - Bottom of the 1st:

Player One singled, advanced to 3rd on error.

Player Two reached on error, caught trying to steal 2nd.

Player Three grounded out.

Player Four struck out swinging.

0 runs, 1 hit, 1 error, 1 LOB.

Avalanche - Top of the 2nd:

Travis Hughes walked, caught trying to steal 2nd.

Billy Taylor tripled, batted forward to home.

Mason Fox grounded out, 1 RBI.

Buddy Haynie struck out looking.

1 run, 1 hit, 0 errors, 0 LOB.

Gordon - Bottom of the 2nd:

Player Five doubled, advanced to 3rd on passed ball, advanced to home on error.

Player Six walked, advanced to 2nd on error, stole 3rd, batted forward to home.

Player Seven struck out looking.

Player Eight struck out swinging.

Player Nine singled, stole 2nd, 1 RBI.

Player One grounded out.

2 runs, 2 hits, 1 error, 1 LOB.

Avalanche - Top of the 3rd:

Matt Murphy singled, stole 2nd, batted forward to home.

Mike McMunn singled, stole 2nd, batted forward to home, 1 RBI.

Doug Hudgins struck out swinging.

Alex Novo singled, batted forward to 3rd, 2 RBI.

Adam Foege doubled.

Randall Bowles struck out swinging.

Travis Hughes grounded out.

2 runs, 4 hits, 0 errors, 2 LOB.

Gordon - Bottom of the 3rd:

Player Two grounded out.

Player Three walked, walked forward to 2nd, batted forward to 3rd.

Player Four walked.

Player Five sacrifice flied.

Player Six grounded out.

0 runs, 0 hits, 0 errors, 2 LOB.

Avalanche - Top of the 4th:

Billy Taylor singled, batted forward to 3rd.

Mason Fox singled, batted forward to 2nd.

Buddy Haynie hit by pitch.  
Matt Murphy struck out swinging.  
Mike McMunn struck out swinging.  
Doug Hudgins struck out looking.  
0 runs, 2 hits, 0 errors, 3 LOB.

Gordon - Bottom of the 4th:  
Player Seven struck out swinging.  
Player Eight singled, walked forward to 2nd, advanced to 3rd on passed ball, batted forward to home.  
Player Nine walked, advanced to 2nd on passed ball.  
Player One walked.  
Player Two sacrifice flied, 1 RBI.  
Player Three struck out swinging.  
1 run, 1 hit, 0 errors, 2 LOB.

Avalanche - Top of the 5th:  
Alex Novo singled, advanced to 2nd on error, batted forward to 3rd.  
Adam Foege struck out looking.  
Chris Codemo flied out.  
Travis Hughes reached on dropped 3rd strike.  
Billy Taylor flied out.  
0 runs, 1 hit, 1 error, 2 LOB.

Gordon - Bottom of the 5th:  
Player Four struck out swinging.  
Player Five grounded out.  
Player Six walked, walked forward to 2nd, caught trying to steal 3rd.  
Player Seven walked.  
0 runs, 0 hits, 0 errors, 1 LOB.

Avalanche - Top of the 6th:  
Mason Fox struck out swinging.  
Buddy Haynie struck out swinging.  
Matt Murphy doubled.  
Mike McMunn struck out looking.  
0 runs, 1 hit, 0 errors, 1 LOB.

Gordon - Bottom of the 6th:  
Player Eight struck out swinging.  
Player Nine struck out swinging.  
Player One grounded out.  
0 runs, 0 hits, 0 errors, 0 LOB.

## **The Actual Box Score Sheet**

Gordon vs Avalanche

6/28/2 20:00 at MaMid

Attendance: 45 Game Duration: 2 hrs 0 min

Gordon : Home

No.	Player's Name	Pos	S	Inning 1	Inning 2	Inning 3	Inning 4	Inning 5	Inning 6
1	Player One	P		1B E-E	GO 4-3		BB		GO 1-3
2	Player Two	C		E5 1-4 CS		GO 5-3	SF 8		
3	Player Three	1B		GO 6-3		BB	K		
4	Player Four	2B		K		BB		K	
5	Player Five	3B			2B PB	SF 9		GO 3	
6	Player Six	SS			BB SB E1	GO 6-3		BB 6-5 CS	
7	Player Seven	LF			K		K	BB	
8	Player Eight	CF			K		1B PB		K
9	Player Nine	RF			1B SB		BB		K
Final Score:				Runs: 0 Hits: 1 Errors: 1 LOB: 1	Runs: 2 Hits: 2 Errors: 1 LOB: 1	Runs: 0 Hits: 0 Errors: 0 LOB: 2	Runs: 1 Hits: 1 Errors: 0 LOB: 2	Runs: 0 Hits: 0 Errors: 0 LOB: 1	Runs: 0 Hits: 0 Errors: 0 LOB: 0

Winning Pitcher: Randall Bowles, Saving Pitcher: Chris Codemo, Losing Pitcher: Player One

Umpires: , , ,

Avalanche : Visitor

No.	Player's Name	Pos	S	Inning 1	Inning 2	Inning 3	Inning 4	Inning 5	Inning 6
5	Buddy Haynie	CF		BB	K		HBP		K
16	Matt Murphy	LF		BB		1B	K		2B
25	Mike McMunn	XH1		K		1B	K		K
7	Doug Hudgins	1B		K		K	K		
4	Alex Novo	SS	1	1B		1B		1B	
4	Alex Novo	C	5					E3	
20	Adam Foege	3B		2B		2B		K	
3	Randall Bowles	P	1					F	
11	Chris Codemo	P	4	K		K		F3	
17	Travis Hughes	RF		BB 1-3-6	GO 3			DTS-PB	
2	Billy Taylor	C	1					F	
2	Billy Taylor	SS	5		3B		1B	F9	
12	Mason Fox	2B			GO 1-3		1B		K
Final Score:				Runs: 3	Runs: 1	Runs: 2	Runs: 0	Runs: 0	Runs: 0
Gordon : 3				Hits: 2	Hits: 1	Hits: 4	Hits: 2	Hits: 1	Hits: 1
Avalanche : 6				Errors: 0	Errors: 0	Errors: 0	Errors: 0	Errors: 1	Errors: 0
				LOB: 1	LOB: 0	LOB: 2	LOB: 3	LOB: 2	LOB: 1

Winning Pitcher: Randall Bowles, Saving Pitcher: Chris Codemo, Losing Pitcher: Player One  
 Umpires: , , ,

Sample Scoring Sheets