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# HANCOCK'S

## INDOOR BASEBALL

GUIDE



COMPLETE INSTRUCTION  
FOR PLAYING, WITH  
DESCRIPTION OF  
MATERIAL USED

PRICE 15 CENTS

W. HANCOCK  
NEW YORK





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# INDOOR BASE BALL GUIDE.

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DESCRIPTION OF THE MATERIAL USED.

*George W. Hancock*

*15*

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# INDOOR BASE BALL.

## INTRODUCTORY.

The game of INDOOR BASE BALL was invented in Chicago in 1887, and came about through a frolic among the members of the Farragut Club who in a spirit of fun on Thanksgiving-day of that year, threw an ordinary boxing glove around the hall which was struck at by one of the boys with a broom. Some twenty members had assembled as usual on holidays, and George W. Hancock, seeing the possibility of a new sport said in a bantering way, "Say, boys, let's play base ball," and the wrestling mat was hauled around cornerwise and a broom obtained. One of the boxing gloves was used for a ball, and with the boys in position they commenced their sport without rule or wisdom, but there was great fun, and when the afternoon had closed, Mr. Hancock gathered the members around him and unfolded a plan which had occurred to him as the players were sliding around the hall.

"I believe this affair can be worked into a regular game of base ball which can be played indoors, and if you will all come down Saturday night I'll make up some rules and have a ball and bat which will suit the purpose of the sport and do no damage to the surroundings."

It was thus that Mr. Hancock gained the title of "father of indoor ball," for he went home and thought out some rules that would equalize the different points of the game, and directed Augustus J. White how to make a ball which could be seen at night and fill all the requirements of the game.

And so the sport was evolved.

The first contest between two nines chosen from among the Farragut members was one of the funniest performances

ever witnessed, and the members and visitors went home loud in their praises of indoor base ball. Owing to the newness of the game and consequent inexperience of those who played, the score ran, oftentimes, into large figures, the first record being 41 to 40. As the play of the athletes improved the result was much smaller figures and more on the professional basis of base ball, until now with numerous clubs and leagues all over the country, the game has reached a scientific standpoint hitherto unsuspected of fulfillment.

It can be played in any hall of size which will permit of sufficient light and room for the diamond and fielding, the composition of the floor being immaterial as the rubber soled shoes required to be worn will allow running on even the waxed floor of a dancing hall. About the smallest size for a playing floor is 40 x 60 feet. A larger surface will of course allow greater freedom of fielding and running. The spectators are usually placed in the right and left field, on either side of the catcher's territory, and in galleries, according to the construction of the room used for play.

The regulations and rules are made to equalize the difference of size and surroundings from outdoor base ball and have been found to work satisfactorily in making up a sport which is both popular and exhilarating.

# RULES

## FOR

# INDOOR BASE BALL.

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### Rule 1.

The diamond is laid at one end of the hall leaving room for the catcher who always plays close behind the batsman. The bases (except the home plate) are  $1\frac{1}{2}$  feet square, made of canvas, half-filled with sand or other similar substance. The home plate is of rubber and is one foot square. Each side of the diamond is 27 feet long and a base is placed in each corner and need not be fastened to the floor. The distance from home to second base, and from first to third base, is  $37\frac{1}{2}$  feet. The pitcher's box is 6 x 3 feet, to be marked with chalk or some apparatus on the floor, the nearest line of said box to be 22 feet from the center of home base. The batsman's box (one to the left and one to the right of home base) shall be 4 feet long and 3 feet wide extending one foot in front of and three feet behind a center line through the home base with its nearest side distant six inches from the home base, the outlines to be marked on the floor.

### Rule 2.—The Foul Lines.

The foul lines must be drawn in straight lines from the outer corner of the home base, along the outer edge of the first and third bases to the boundaries of the ground so that the bases shall come within the diamond.

### Rule 3.—The Ball.

The ball must be 17 inches in circumference, made of a yielding substance,  $8\frac{1}{4}$  ounces in weight, and covered with a white skin; should it become ripped or torn during a game a new one must be substituted.

**Rule 4.—The Bat.**

The bat must be  $2\frac{3}{4}$  feet long and not larger than  $1\frac{1}{4}$  inches in diameter in the largest part, and must have a rubber tip on the handle to prevent slipping. It must be made otherwise of wood except that a metal rod not larger in diameter than one-eighth of an inch may be passed through the center the entire length of the bat. The handle may be wound with string.

**Rule 5.—The Players.**

Nine or eight players must constitute a side. The players' positions shall be such as shall be assigned them by their captain, except that the pitcher must take his position within the pitcher's lines. When in position on the field, all players will be designated as "fielders" in these rules.

**Rule 6.—The Pitcher.**

The pitcher shall take his position facing the batsman with both feet on the ground, wholly within the box. He shall not make more than one step in the act of delivering the ball. He shall hold the ball, before the delivery, fairly in front of his body, and in sight of the umpire. Only straight-armed pitching in which the arm and hand swing parallel with the body, will be allowed, and the ball is not to be curved, the so-called up-shoot being considered illegal.

**Rule 7.—The Game.**

A game shall consist of nine innings to each contesting club, except that, if the side first at bat scores less runs in nine innings than the other side has scored in eight innings, the game shall then terminate; or, if the side last at bat in the ninth inning scores the winning run before the third man is out, the game shall terminate.

**Rule 8.—A Tie Game.**

If the score be a tie at the end of nine innings to each side, play shall only be continued until the side first at bat shall have scored one or more runs than the other side in an

equal number of innings, or until the other side shall score one or more runs than the side first at bat.

**Rule 9.—A Forfeited Game.**

A forfeited game shall be declared by the umpire in favor of the club not in fault, at the request of such club, in the following cases:

(a.) If the nine of a club fails to appear upon the field, or being upon the field fails to begin the game within one minute after the umpire has called "play" at the hour appointed for the beginning of the game, unless such delay in appearing or in commencing the game be unavoidable.

(b.) If, after the game has begun, one side refuses or fails to continue playing, unless such game has been suspended or terminated by the umpire.

**Rule 10.—Substitutes.**

The base runner shall not have a substitute run for him, except by consent of the captains of the contesting teams.

**Rule 11.—Choice of Innings.**

The choice of innings shall be decided by flipping a coin.

**Rule 12.—Good and Bad Balls.**

A ball legally delivered by the pitcher which passes over any part of the home base, not lower than the batsman's knee or higher than his shoulder, is a good ball. Otherwise it is a bad ball.

**Rule 13.—Balks.**

A motion to deliver the ball by the pitcher without doing so, or holding the ball so long as to unnecessarily delay the game, constitutes a balk.

**Rule 14.—Illegal Balls.**

A ball delivered by the pitcher with any part of his person out of the box, or with a curve, is an illegal pitch, and entitles any base runners and the batsman to a base.

**Rule 15.—Dead Balls.**

Any pitched ball striking the batter is a dead ball, but does not entitle him to a base. If it should be the third strike the batter is out, and no base can be run on that ball.

**Rule 16.—Not in Play.**

In case of a foul strike, foul hit ball not legally caught out, dead ball, or base runner put out for being struck by a fair hit ball, the ball shall not be considered in play until it is held by the pitcher standing in his box.

**Rule 17.—Block Balls.**

A block is a batted or thrown ball that is stopped or handled by any person not engaged in the game.

(a.) Whenever a block occurs, base runners may run the bases without being put out, until the ball has been returned to and held by the pitcher standing in his box.

(b.) In the case of a block, if a person not engaged in the game should retain possession of the ball, or throw or kick it beyond the reach of the fielders, the umpire should call "time," and require each base runner to stop at the last base touched by him until the ball be returned to the pitcher standing in his box.

(c.) Special ground rules may be made allowing a certain number of bases on a fair hit into the crowd, in which case the above sections are void.

**Rule 18.—The Scoring of Runs.**

One run shall be scored every time a base runner after having legally touched the first three bases, shall touch the home base before three men are put out. If the third man is forced out, or is put out before reaching first base, a run shall not be scored.

**Rule 19.—Fair and Foul Balls.**

(a.) A batted ball which strikes inside or on the foul line is fair, the first point of contact with the floor, object or fielder, deciding, regardless of where it afterwards rolls.

(b.) A batted ball first striking outside the foul lines shall be foul.

**Rule 20.—Strikes.**

(a.) A strike is a ball struck at by the batsman without its touching his bat; or,

(b.) A good ball, legally delivered by the pitcher, but not struck at by the batsman.

**Rule 21.—Foul Strikes.**

A foul strike is a ball batted by the batsman when any part of his person is upon ground outside the lines of the batsman's position.

**Rule 22.—The Batsman is Out.**

(a.) The batsman is out, if he bats out of turn and makes a fair hit before the error is discovered.

(b.) If he fails to take his position within one minute after the umpire has called for the batsman.

(c.) If he makes a foul hit, or foul tip, and the ball be held by a fielder before touching the ground or any wall or fixture.

(d.) If he makes a foul strike.

(e.) If he attempts to hinder the catcher from fielding the ball, evidently without effort to make a fair hit.

(f.) If, while the first base be occupied by a base runner, he has three strikes, except when two men are already out.

**Rule 23.—Base Running.**

The batsman becomes a base runner,

(a.) Instantly after he makes a fair hit.

(b.) Instantly after four balls have been called by the umpire.

(c.) Instantly after three strikes.

(d.) Instantly after the umpire declares an illegal delivery of a ball by the pitcher, which includes a curve, or being out of his box.

**Rule 24.—Bases to be Touched.**

The base runner must touch each base in regular order, viz: First, second, third and home base; but when obliged to return may go directly to the base which he legally holds.

**Rule 25.—Entitled to Bases.**

The base runner shall be entitled, without being put out, to take one base in the following cases :

- (a.) If while he was batsman, the umpire called four balls.
- (b.) If the umpire awards a succeeding batsman a base on four balls or in case of an illegal delivery, and the base runner is thereby forced to vacate the base held by him.
- (c.) If the umpire calls a "balk" or "illegal pitch."
- (d.) If a ball delivered by the pitcher pass the catcher or is fumbled, only one base may be taken, provided the runner make it, unless it is the third strike or fourth ball when the batsman is entitled to all he can get.
- (e.) If the pitcher does not give him time to return to his base.
- (f.) If upon a fair hit the ball strikes the person or clothing of the umpire on fair grounds.
- (g.) If he be prevented from making a base by the obstruction of an adversary.
- (h.) If when he was batsman the pitcher delivered an "illegal ball."

**Rule 26.—When to Start**

- (a.) A base runner must not leave his base when the pitcher holds the ball standing in his box.
- (b.) A base runner must not leave his base on a pitched ball not struck, until after it has reached or passed the catcher on penalty of being called back.
- (c.) A base runner must be on his base when the pitcher is ready to deliver the ball to the batsman.

[Starting too soon does not exempt a base runner from being put out on that particular play. The umpire must not make a decision in regard to a premature start until a base runner has reached the next base or is put out.]

**Rule 27.—Returning to Bases.**

The base runner shall return to his base, and shall be entitled to so return without being put out,

- (a.) If the umpire declares a foul hit which is not legally caught by a fielder.
- (b.) If the umpire declares a foul strike.

- (c.) If the umpire declares a dead ball.
- (d.) If the person or clothing of the umpire is struck by a ball thrown by the catcher to intercept a base runner.
- (e.) If he is called back by the umpire for starting too soon.

**Rule 28.—A Base Runner is Out.**

(a.) If, having made a fair hit while batsman, such fair hit ball be held by a fielder before touching the ground, wall or any fixture.

(b.) If he intentionally kicks or interferes with a ball he has just batted.

[If a ball he has just batted rebounds and hits him he shall not be declared out on that account.]

(c.) If the third strike be caught before touching the ground or any object.

(d.) If, after three strikes or a fair hit, he be touched with the ball in the hands of a fielder before such base runner touches first base.

(e.) If, after three strikes or a fair hit, the ball be securely held by a fielder while touching first base with any part of his person, before such base runner touches first base.

(f.) If, in running from first to second base, from second to third base, or from third to home base, he runs more than three feet from a direct line between such bases to avoid being touched by a ball in the hands of a fielder; but in case a fielder be occupying a base runner's proper path, attempting to field a batted ball, then the base runner shall run out of the path and shall not be declared out for so doing.

(g.) If he fails to avoid a fielder attempting to field a batted ball, or if he in any way obstructs a fielder attempting to field a batted ball, or intentionally interferes with a thrown ball.

(h.) If, at any time while the ball is in play, he be touched by the ball in the hands of a fielder, unless some part of his person is touching a base he is entitled to occupy; provided, the ball be held by the fielder after touching him; but—exception as to first base—in running to first base, he may overrun said base without being put out for being off

said base, after first touching it, provided he returns at once and retouches the base, after which he may be put out as at any other base. If, in overrunning first base, he also attempts to run to second base, he shall forfeit such exemption from being put out.

(i.) If, when a fair or foul fly is legally caught, such ball is legally held by a fielder on the base occupied by the base runner when such ball was struck, or the base runner be touched with the ball in the hands of a fielder, before he retouches said base after such fair or foul hit ball was so caught.

(j.) If a fair hit ball strikes him before touching a fielder, and in such case no base shall be run unless forced by the batsman becoming a base runner, and no run shall be scored.

(k.) If when running to a base he fail to touch the intervening base or bases in regular order, he may be put out at the base he fails to touch, or by being touched by the ball in the hands of a fielder, in the same manner as in running to first base.

#### **Rule 29.—Turn Either Way.**

In returning to first base after overrunning, the base runner may turn either way.

#### **Rule 30.—Safely on a Base.**

A base runner is safely on a base if he slides with the bag and clings to it; or, if any part of his person is touching the spot where the bag should be; or, he is safe if he has touched the home base or where the base should be.

[If, in sliding with the bag at any base, he should stop, he must then return with the bag to the proper spot before starting for another base, the same as in overrunning first base.]

#### **Rule 31.—Coaching Rules.**

Two coaches are restricted in coaching to the base runners only, and are not allowed to address any remarks except to the base runners and then only in words of necessary direction. They must not stand within three feet of a base or base line. To enforce the above, the captain of the opposite side

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may call the attention of the umpire to the offense, and upon a repetition of the same the player shall be debarred from further coaching during the game.

**Rule 32.—Suitable Shoes.**

Only shoes with rubber soles or other soft material shall be used.

**Rule 33.—Pitcher Must Wait.**

When a base runner is legally entitled to return to a base, the pitcher must wait a reasonable time for him to reach the base on penalty of giving the base runner another base for violation.

**Rule 34.—Umpires.**

(a.) The umpires are masters of the field from the commencement to the termination of the game, and are entitled to the respect of the spectators, and any person offering any insult or injury to either of them must be promptly ejected from the room by those in charge.

(b.) The umpires must compel the players to observe the provisions of all the playing rules, and are hereby invested with authority to order any player to do or omit to do any act as they may deem necessary to give force and effect to any and all of such provisions.

(c.) There shall be two umpires who shall take suitable positions on the field for observing the plays which they are to judge.

(d.) No. 1 shall decide upon and call all balls, strikes, blocks, dead balls, balks, illegal deliveries, fair hits, foul hits, foul strikes, all questions arising at home plate, and shall call play or time.

(e.) No. 2 shall judge all base plays except those at the home plate.

(f.) The umpires shall be sole judges of the play and discussion will only be allowed on correct interpretation of the rules, and not on any optional decision. All such discussions restricted to the two captains.

(g.) The two umpires shall change positions at the end of every full inning. Umpires shall not be chosen from the two clubs contesting.

(h.) In case an umpire for some reason cannot decide a play he may refer to his colleague. They shall ask the captain of the home team whether there are any special ground rules to be enforced, and if there are, they shall see that they are duly enforced, provided they do not conflict with any of these rules.

(i.) The umpire must keep the contesting nines playing constantly from the commencement of the game to its termination, allowing such delays only as are rendered unavoidable by accident or injury. They must, until the completion of the game, require the players of each side to promptly take their positions in the field as soon as the third man is put out, and must require the first striker of the opposite side to be in his position at the bat as soon as the fielders are in their places.

**Rule 35.—Calling “Play” and “Time.”**

(a.) The umpire designated No.1 must call “play” promptly at the hour designated by the home club, and on the call of “play” the game must immediately begin. When he calls “time” play shall be suspended until he calls “play” again, and during the interim no player shall be put out, base be run, or run be scored. The umpire shall suspend play only for an accident to himself or a player (but in case of accident to a fielder, “time” shall not be called until the ball be returned to, and held by the pitcher, standing in his box.)

(b.) “Time” must not be called for trivial causes. The practice of players suspending the game to discuss or contest a decision with either umpire, is a gross violation of the rules and the umpire must not allow it.

(c.) If a player wilfully disobey the cautions of the umpires in regard to violations of the rules, he may, at the discretion of the umpires, be ordered out of the game and his place be filled if such decision reduce the side to less than eight players.

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**GENERAL DEFINITIONS.**

"Play" is the order of the umpire to begin the game or to resume play after its suspension.

"Time" is the order of the umpire to suspend play. Such suspension must not extend beyond the day of the game.

"Game" is the announcement by the umpire that the game is terminated.

"An inning" is a term at the bat of the players representing a club in a game, and is completed when three of such players have been put out, as provided in these rules.

"A time at bat" is the term at bat of a batsman. It begins when he takes his position, and continues until he is put out or becomes a base runner.

"A foul tip" is included in a "foul hit."

**SCORING.**

There are three columns in scoring indoor base ball. The first contains the number of runs made by each player during the game; the second, the number of times he has been put out; the third, the total number of bases reached by a player in whatever manner during the game. The columns are headed: R. (runs), O. (outs), T (totals).

Adopted by the Midwinter Indoor Base Ball  
League, Chicago, Dec. 3, 1890.

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Adopted by the Bankers' Indoor Base Ball  
League, Chicago, Dec. 4, 1890.

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Adopted by the Chicago Indoor Base Ball  
League, Dec. 13, 1890.



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