

2025 - 26

RULES SUMMARY

THEABL.COM.AU

Below is a concise overview of key Australian Baseball League (ABL) rules, regulations, and roster construction details for the 2025–26 season.

A full copy of the ABL Rule Book is distributed to all four member clubs. Please use this as a reference for any final decision. This is meant as an informative guide only.

ROSTER STRUCTURE

Active List

The following rules guide ABL roster active game lists each series

- 22 players + 2 Emerging Players (Emerging players: max 4 games per series)
- Minimum Australians: 12
- Maximum Imports: 11
- Maximum Independent Import Players: 2
- Reserve Players: Not permitted
- Development Players: Up to 2 (must be Australian and ≤25 years old)
- Player Points System: Not in use for 2025–26

Emerging Players

- Teams may nominate up to 10 Emerging Players as part of a 35-man Registered List submitted to the ABL;
- Must be 25 years or younger as of 1 February 2026.
- No minimum at-bat or innings requirements in 2025–26.
- Emerging Player eligibility does not apply to postseason.

Player Age Eligibility

- Players must be 17 years or older by 31 January 2026, or 16 years old if turning 17 before that date.

IMPORT CLASSIFICATIONS

Independent Import Player

Not affiliated with MLB, KBO, CPBL, or NPB club.

- Has represented another nation (other than Australia) in WBC competition.

Affiliate Import Player

- Active MLB/KBO/CPBL/NPB-affiliated player.
- Paid affiliate released during ABL season.
- Must appear on an official MLB-approved player list.

PLAYOFF ELIGIBILITY

To qualify for postseason play:

- A player must appear on a team's Active List for at least three (3) series
- Must have taken the field in at least one game of each of those series.

Teams must submit their Playoff List no later than 72 hours before the first postseason game. Requests for exemptions to this rule must be made in writing to the ABL's DRP sub-committee.

UNIFORM PLAYING RULES

- Official Baseball Rules (OBR): MLB rules apply, unless otherwise stated.
- Designated Hitter: In use (OBR 5.11).
- Doubleheaders:
    - o Standard: one 7-inning game + one 9-inning game.
    - o If Game 1 exceeds 9 innings, Game 2 may revert to a 7-inning contest upon request by an ABL Club and the mutual consent of the opposing Team Managers and be approved by the ABL. If there is no consent prior to scheduled commencement of the game, the ABL will make a unilateral determination
    - o Postponed/rescheduled doubleheaders = two 7-inning games.
- Rules Not Adopted by ABL:
    - o Pitch clock
    - o Shift restrictions
    - o Larger bases

POSTSEASON FORMAT

Qualification:

- Top two teams by winning percentage advance directly to the ABL Championship Series (ABLCS).

Format:

- Best-of-three series between Seed #1 (Home) and Seed #2 (Away).
- All games hosted by the higher seed.
- Winner = 2025–26 ABL Champion

TIE-BREAKING PROCEDURES

(For determining postseason qualification and seeding)

If two or more teams finish the regular season with identical winning percentages, the Australian Baseball League (ABL) will determine standings order according to the following procedures:

Two Team Tie

If two teams are tied with the same winning percentage at the end of the regular season (including all rescheduled games), the higher-ranked team will be determined as follows:

1. Head-to-head record between the two tied teams during the championship season.

2. If still tied — if the Teams remain tied then the Tied Team with the higher winning percentage against the Team with the highest overall winning percentage that is not one of the tied teams. If the Teams remain tied, this process will continue in descending order against each of the teams with the next highest winning percentages that is not one of the tied teams, until the tie is broken; or,

3. If still tied — Fewest runs allowed per defensive inning in head-to-head games between the tied teams.

4. If still tied — Coin flip conducted by the ABL (procedure determined at ABL's discretion).

Three Team Tie

If three teams are tied with identical winning percentages, the following procedures apply:

1. Head-to-head winning percentage among the three tied teams during the championship season.

    o The team with the higher head-to-head record among the three is ranked higher.

2. If two of the three teams remain tied after step 1, apply the Two-Team Tiebreaker procedure above between those two remaining teams.

3. If all three teams remain tied:

a. Compare winning percentage vs the highest-ranked non-tied team.

b. If still tied, continue the process in descending order through the standings until one team is separated.

c. Once one team is separated, remove that team and apply the Two-Team Tiebreaker procedure to the remaining two.

4. If still tied after all the above steps — Random draw conducted by the ABL (used only to determine the lowest-ranked team among the tied teams).

Four Team Tie

If four teams are tied with identical winning percentages:

1. Head-to-head winning percentage among all tied teams.

    o Teams with higher/lower head-to-head percentages are separated and removed from the group.

2. Remaining tied teams are then separated using the Three-Team or Two-Team Tiebreaker procedures as applicable.

3. If still tied:

    o Apply winning percentage vs next-highest-ranked non-tied team, continuing in de scending order until separation occurs.

4. If still tied after all calculations — Random draw conducted by the ABL, used only to determine the lowest-ranked team among the tied group.

    o Once one team is separated, the remaining teams are re-ranked using the above steps.

MEDIA NOTE

This summary is intended as a quick-reference guide for accredited media covering the 2025–26 ABL season.

For full details, refer to the official ABL Rules and Regulations Handbook issued to member clubs.