

How To Fit Baseball/Softball Products



Today's baseball and softball products offer tremendous technology features designed to improve your game. Most of the gear is specifically designed to help maximize your performance while still helping to reduce the risk of injury.

How To Buy A Baseball/Softball Bat

Nothing has changed more in the game of Baseball & Softball than bats. New technology has delivered bats that not only enhance performance but also are tailored to an individual player's strengths. It is essential that you select a bat that fits your skill level, height, weight, and hitting strength. It is also important to check with your league for any specifications or restrictions they may have in place.

Determining Your Bat Size

There are some standard rules of thumb in selecting the appropriate bat length. The charts below offer some guidelines based on age and weight and height.

Age

- Using your age as a guide, use the chart below to determine the bat length that fits your body.

Determine Your Bat Length by Age	
Age	Bat length
5-7	24"-26"
8-9	26"-28"
10	28"-29"
11-12	30"-31"
13-14	31"-32"
15-16	32"-33"
17+	34"

Height and weight

- Height and Weight measurements are a more precise way to determine your optimal bat length.
- Use the height and weight chart to give you a general idea of the length of bat that fits your body.

Determine Your Bat Length by Weight and Height										
Your weight (pounds)	Your height (inches)									
	36-40	41-44	45-48	49-52	53-56	57-60	61-64	65-68	69-72	73+
Bat length										
less than 60	26"	27"	28"	29"	29"					
61-70	27"	27"	28"	29"	30"	30"				
71-80		28"	28"	29"	30"	30"	31"			
81-90		28"	29"	29"	30"	30"	31"	32"		
91-100		28"	29"	30"	30"	31"	31"	32"		
101-110		29"	29"	30"	30"	31"	31"	32"		
111-120		29"	29"	30"	30"	31"	31"	32"		
121-130		29"	29"	30"	30"	31"	32"	33"	33"	
131-140		29"	30"	30"	31"	31"	32"	33"	33"	
141-150			30"	30"	31"	31"	32"	33"	33"	
151-160			30"	31"	31"	32"	32"	33"	33"	33"
161-170				31"	31"	32"	32"	33"	33"	34"
171-180						32"	33"	33"	34"	34"
180+							33"	33"	34"	34"

Other Bat Fitting Tips

- Bats are also weighted in ounces and are fitted with a *weight-to-length ratio*, often shown as -8, -9, etc. (This basically means a 34-inch bat with a -6 ratio weighs 28 ounces).
- Selecting weight really depends on two critical factors--your strength and hitting style.
- For young players there is an easy test to see if a bat is the right weight. Have them grip the bat with one hand and hold it straight out away from their body (the arm should be straight as well). They should easily be able to hold the bat in this position. If not, the bat is most likely too heavy and you should try a lighter bat.
- Generally, a lighter bat will give you quicker swing speed with greater control.

How To Buy A Baseball Glove

Gloves come in many styles and sizes. They are designed to fit the position you play as well as provide you options for your personal preferences. For growing players, avoid buying gloves that the player will grow into - it will be much more difficult for them to catch and control the ball. Below are some quick tips in selecting your next glove.

Determining Glove Size

Age is an important factor in selecting your next glove, however, the position you play is just as important when choosing a baseball or softball glove.

Youngsters/Beginners

- Youth models are smaller to help kids maintain control.
- Kids under the age of 8 should stick with a glove from 9 to 11 inches.
- Kids from 8 to early teens, consider an 11-inch glove if playing multiple positions.
- Beginners will benefit from the added control that they get from smaller gloves.

High School/ Adult

- Outfielders need 12 to 12 1/2 inch gloves with deeper pockets.
- Infielders need smaller gloves (10 1/2 to 11 1/2 inch) with shallower pockets for better control and quicker ball transfer.
- Pitchers can go with a slightly larger glove than infielders but still need a small enough glove for fielding and throwing quickly.
- Softball players require gloves that are slightly longer in length and deeper in the pocket to help field the bigger ball.

Glove Size

- The table below is a guideline to help get you started with your glove selection.

Determining Your Glove Size		
Age	Position	Glove size
Under 8	Infield	9 inches
Under 8	Outfield	9 - 11 inches
9-13	Infield	9-10 inches
9-13	Outfield	11-12 inches
High School/Adult	Infield	10 1/2-11 1/2 inches
High School/Adult	Outfield	12-12 1/2 inches

Determining Your Glove Type

- Gloves are designed to help you field specific positions. A key element in determining the size glove/mitt you buy is the position you play in the field. Position and age are two critical factors to consider when purchasing your next glove. Below are some of the key positions and glove considerations:

Catcher's Mitt

- A fingerless mitt (it does not have individual fingers).
- Has heavy padding to reduce the sting from the pitcher's throw.
- Reinforced to withstand the heavy use throughout a game.

First base

- Similar to a catcher's mitt, but has less padding.
- It is longer to help the first baseman field throws from infielders.
- A shallow pocket allows the first baseman to quickly retrieve the ball from the mitt.

Infield

- A five-fingered glove with a shallow pocket.
- A youth size is between 9 - 11 inches.
- Adults 10 1/2 to 11 1/2 inch is the typical baseball size.
- Softball infielder gloves have a deeper pocket to accept a softball.
- Second basemen prefer a smaller glove to help make those quick throws while still having control.
- Shortstops typically use something in the middle for grounders and quick throws.
- Third basemen generally prefer a larger glove.

Outfield

- Usually sized at 12 to 12 1/2-inches for adults, about 11 inches for children.
- A deeper pocket to handle balls hit high in the air.
- Longer length to give as much reach as possible.
- If you plan to play several positions, find a glove that provides the most control for a variety of outfield positions.

Softball gloves

- Generally larger both in the pocket and length to help players handle the larger ball.

*If you play both baseball and softball, and you only want to buy one glove, select a softball glove.

Additional Fitting Tips

Today's gloves have different features that help you maximize your game. Below are key fitting tips to get the most out of your glove.

Pocket

- The size of the pocket depends on your position.
- Shallow pockets help middle infielders quickly grab the ball and throw.
- Deeper pockets help outfielders shag down fly balls.
- Softball players need a bigger pocket to catch the bigger ball.

Webbing

- Different styles of webbing are available to either help you better field your position or to fit your preference.
- A closed web is preferred for pitchers who want to hide the ball from the batter.
- Outfielders and third basemen prefer the extra support from a closed web.
- An open web helps middle infielders get the ball out of their gloves quicker to make throws.

Padding

The amount of padding in the pocket depends on the position played.

- The catcher's mitt has more padding to handle hard throws from a pitcher.
- Glove makers have been adding more padding for other positions as well to help players handle the sting of hard-hit balls.
- There also may be padding in the wrist area to make the glove more comfortable.

Materials

Gloves come in a variety of materials, with the difference being in the feel and durability.

- Leather
 - Leather offers the best comfort, control and feel.
 - The better the leather, the better the glove.
- Treated leather
 - Leather is treated and softened with chemicals for faster break-in and increased durability.
 - Treated leather also reduces the care needed for the glove and helps the glove keep its shape.
- Synthetic materials
 - A lighter, less-durable material.
 - Less expensive, generally found in youth gloves.
 - Won't withstand the wear and tear of playing ball nearly as well as leather.