

How to buy a Youth Softball Bat

LENGTH

Just like finding the right size glove and cleats are essential, finding the right length softball bat is also important. There are three ways to measure whether a bat is the right length:

- 1) Place the bat knob at the center of your chest and extend the barrel out toward your fingertips. If you can touch the end of the bat with your fingertips, the bat should be an appropriate size.
- 2) Place the bottom knob of the bat in the center of your chest facing outward. If you are able to reach out and grab the barrel of the bat, then it should be an appropriate length.
- 3) Stand the bat up vertically against your leg. If the bat reaches your mid-hip, it should be a suitable length.

WEIGHT**

Bat weight can vary among models, and it's really up to your preferences. If you're a stronger player, you can probably get away with swinging a heavier bat. If you want a little quicker swing, maybe drop a few ounces. Ultimately, though, you want to keep your swing as level as possible.

An all-too-common problem with younger players is that they try to swing too heavy of a softball bat. This causes their hands to drop during their swing and reduced the effectiveness.

A good test to see if you can handle a certain bat weight is to hold the bat in one hand, with your arm extended to your side for 30 seconds. If you can keep the bat extended without dropping it, you should be able to properly swing that weight.

If you do not have a bat handy, you can substitute with either a can of beans or four sticks of butter. These will mimic a bat with a -10 drop, and while the physics won't be absolutely identical, it is still a good indication as to whether or not you can handle that weight.

DROP

The drop is the difference between length and weight. A bat with a smaller drop will indicate a heavier bat, which may be too much to handle at the plate. Take your length and weight numbers from before and try to find a bat with similar measurements to fit your needs.

Finally, take your budget into consideration when purchasing a youth softball bat. If your child is still growing and will ultimately outgrow the bat after a season or two, don't break the bank. There are a number of options available to fit every budget without sacrificing performance.

Finding the right softball bat could help enhance your at-bat performance. Keeping these tips in mind can help in making sure the bat you choose will be a home run.

WEIGHT**

Bat weight is measured in ounces (oz.). A bat's weight is often tied to its "weight drop" -- its length in inches versus its weight in ounces. For instance, a 32-inch, 22-ounce bat would be referred to as a -10 bat.

$$\text{BAT LENGTH (IN.)} - \text{BAT WEIGHT (OZ.)} = \text{WEIGHT DROP}$$

As a general rule of thumb, the higher the competition or league level (meaning, from youth league up to the pros) the lesser the weight drop. A lesser weight drop means the bat feels heavier. So a -5 bat will feel heavier than a -10 bat.

Selecting the right bat weight depends on three main factors: sport, league rules, and player preference.

Leagues have rules identifying which weight drops are permitted for play. Prior to choosing a bat, we recommend finding out if your league has a specific standard for bat weight drops in order for them to be permitted. For more information on league rules, please refer to the [Leagues](#) section.

Players with less experience generally swing lighter bats in order to have better bat control. More experienced players generally swing a heavier bats to help maximize power. A way to tell if a bat is right for you is your swing speed. A bat that is too heavy is harder to swing, causing a loss in momentum, reduced distance or a miss altogether. If a bat is too light for a player, the player could miss out on the extra force they could generate from a heavier bat. A happy medium needs to be found. It is highly recommended you demo a bat against live pitching speeds in order to find the best weight for you. Fastpitch bats typically have a weight drop ranging from -8 to -13. Younger players often use a lighter bat (larger weight drop) and, as they increase their skill level, they often progress to a heavier bat (smaller weight drop).


$$\begin{array}{r} \text{BAT LENGTH} - \text{BAT WEIGHT} = \text{WEIGHT DROP} \\ \text{(INCHES)} \quad \quad \quad \text{(OUNCES)} \end{array}$$

Example: A 32 inch bat that weighs 22 ounces is a -10, or 'DROP 10'

Weight	Height									
	3'-3'4"	3'5"-3'8"	3'9"-4'	4'1"-4'4"	4'5"-4'8"	4'9"-5'	5'1"-5'4"	5'5"-5'8"	5'9"-6'	6'1"-Over
Under 60 Lbs.	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"	30"	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"
Over 180							33"	33"	34"	

MOST POPULAR LENGTH BY AGE

AGE	5 - 7	8 - 9	10	11 - 12	13 - 14	15 - 16
LENGTH	24" - 26"	26" - 28"	28" - 29"	30" - 31"	31" - 32"	32" - 33"

Sources:
<https://www.slugger.com/en-us/how-to-choose-a-bat/fastpitch>
<https://protips.dickssportinggoods.com/sports-and-activities/softball/buy-youth-softball-bat>

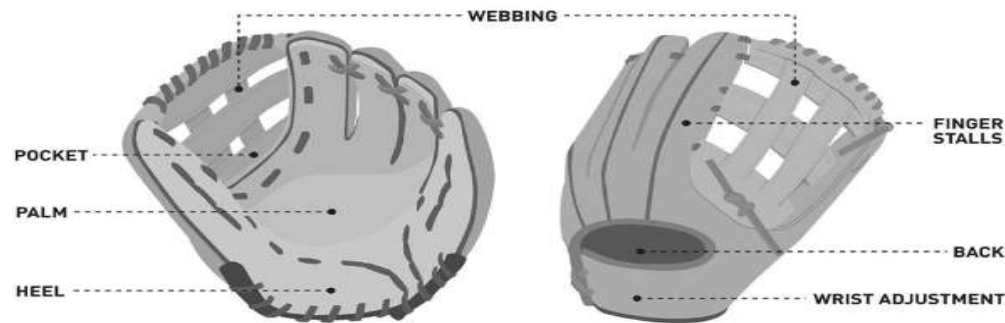
How to buy the right Softball Glove

HOW SHOULD A SOFTBALL GLOVE FIT?

The fit of your softball glove is crucial to your ability to catch the ball or transfer it from the glove to your hand. For proper sizing, measure from the tip of your index finger to the start of your wrist in inches. Your glove should have a snug fit. So, choose a size that currently fits your hand and not one that you think you can grow into.

Catcher's mitts will have the largest circumference, while first baseman's mitts are the longest. Infielders will want a shorter length for ease of transferring the ball from their glove to their hand.

Every element of a softball glove serves a purpose. Understanding glove anatomy can help you meet your needs on the field. Take a closer look at the parts of a softball glove.



Webbing: The web design of your glove is key in ball control. Webs have two main styles: open or closed. The one you choose will depend on your position and preferences. Fielders typically like an open web, while pitchers prefer a closed web to hide their pitches.

Pocket: Like the web, pockets help connect the fingers and thumb for ball control on impact. In general, infielders prefer a shallow pocket, while outfielders opt for a deep pocket.

Back: The back is the space for your index finger. There are both open and closed designs. Open backs have a larger space for more hand and wrist flexibility. Meanwhile, a closed back features a smaller hole for added stability.

Finger stalls: Finger stalls are the openings on a glove for your fingers.

Palm: The palm of your glove has padding underneath the leather for impact protection.

Heel: The heel is the lower part of the glove that protects the bottom of your hand.

Wrist adjustment: A wrist adjustment is a feature that allows for an optimal fit. They come in a variety of styles, including lace adjustments, D-ring fasteners, buckle systems and hook-and-loop fasteners.

Age	Catcher (circumference)	Pitcher (hand size)	First Base (hand size)	Infield (hand size)	Outfield (hand size)
Ages 7 and under	29.5-30"	8-10.5"	11.5"	8-10.5"	9-11"
Ages 8-10	30-32"	10.5-11.5"	11.5-12"	10.5-11.5"	10-12"
Ages 11-13	31-32.5"	11.5-12.5"	12-13"	11.25-12.5"	11.75-12.5"
High school and adult	33-35"	12-13"	12-13"	11.5-12.5"	12-13"

Source: <https://www.academy.com/explore/how-buy-and-break-right-softball-glove-you>