

Choosing A Baseball Bat



When choosing a baseball bat, there are several factors that must be considered, which include level of play, size of the batter, cost and comfort.

Aluminum and composite baseball bats are generally preferred to wooden bats due to their light weight and high strength. Lighter bats are generally preferable to heavier bats as they allow the batter to generate enough speed to put power into it. Additionally, aluminum bats can provide more “pop” of the baseball off the bat, and are much more durable (therefore cost effective) than wooden bats. Bats today are becoming increasingly



high tech and expensive – with youth bats reaching above \$300 in price.

The comfort of the baseball bat to the hitter is the most important factor in choosing a bat; the more comfortable you are the better. Take a few swings with the bat and try to picture yourself in a game. Better yet, borrow a bat from one of your teammates and see how it feels – a swing in the store doesn’t always feel like a swing at the plate! When choosing a bat for younger players, make sure they can swing the bat without struggling – we’ve all seen the young players struggling to swing bats that are far too big for them.

Size of the Bat (Length and Weight)

Another important factor in choosing the right sized baseball bat is the height of the batter. In general, tall batters should use longer bats. Below are two tables with general guidelines for choosing baseball bat length.

Determine Which Bat Fits Your Body

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

Determine Your Bat	Your height (inches)
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Length by Weight and Height										
Your weight (pounds)	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"

Determine Your Bat Weight by a Mathematical Formula

Worth Sports conducted a study with the University of Arizona, in which they determined a formula that calculates the best bat weights for hitters, based on their height. Formulas and examples are listed below.

Youth League Baseball (8-10 yr. olds)	Formula	Example
Age Group		
Youth (8-10 yr. olds)	Formula: (Height in inches/4) + 4	(54 in./4) + 4 = 17.5 oz.
Youth (11-12 yrs)	Formula: (Weight in pounds/18) + 14	(110 lbs./18) + 14 = 20.1 oz.
High School & College	Formula: (Height in inches/3) + 5	(72 in./3) + 5 = 29 oz.

Level of Play & Regulations

The level of play should always be considered when selecting a bat, as every level from little league through major league has varying regulations regarding what size and materials are allowed.

Baseball bats are measured using their length to weight ratio, a negative number that represents how many ounces a bat weighs compared to its length in inches. For example, a 32 inch bat that weighs 28 ounces is a -4 . The largest ratio is in the range of -12 (for little league bats), while college and high school bats are restricted to a -3 . These restrictions are for safety reasons – a college or high school player swinging a very light bat (-4 +) would simply have too much power and could pose a danger to other players on the field. Make sure to check the regulations of your league before buying a baseball bat!