

## **RTGSA / ASA Equipment Recommendations & Guidelines**

**Every player will need at a minimum:**

- 1. Fielding/defensive face mask**
- 2. Glove**
- 3. Cleats**
- 4. Batting helmet with a face mask**

You can often find acceptable used gear on any re-sale website, especially for 6U and 8U.

Please reach out to your coach or a board member if you have any questions!

### **Fielding/defensive face mask (REQUIRED)**

RTGSA requires every player to use a fielding/defensive face mask.



### **Glove (REQUIRED)**

DON'T BUY A BASEBALL GLOVE! Softball players require gloves that are slightly longer in length and deeper in the pocket than baseball gloves to help field the bigger ball. Keep these things in mind when buying a softball glove:

- Youth gloves are smaller to help kids maintain control (avoid the urge to buy a bigger glove that she'll "grow into")
- Leather gloves are the preferred material
- Buy a glove that is comfortable on the hand applicable to the size of the girl.

Basic Guidelines:

Division	Glove Size
6U	9 – 11 inches
8U	10 – 11 inches
10U	10 ½ – 12 inches
12U	11 ½ – 13 inches
14U	11 ½ – 13 inches

### **Cleats (REQUIRED)**

Baseball and/or softball shoes have one unique feature to look for that makes them different than soccer shoes: the toe cleat. Baseball shoes have a toe cleat at the very tip of the shoe that soccer shoes do not have. This helps players get better traction in quick starts where sudden movement occurs. RTGSA requires all players to wear baseball/softball shoes with plastic cleats; however soccer shoes with plastic cleats may be worn. Metal cleats are not allowed by RTGSA.

### Helmet (REQUIRED)

All helmets must have chin strap, face mask and be NOCSAE certified. Never use a helmet that is cracked, deformed or the interior padding has deteriorated.

### Softball Bat (Can be shared, but highly recommended)

DON'T BUY A BASEBALL BAT! Any bat used must be an ASA certified softball bat (look for the marking on the barrel or check the [ASA Equipment](#) webpage for a list of approved and illegal bats). You will find as many different opinions about bat length/weight as you do varieties of bats. Here are some general guidelines for purchasing a softball bat:

- **Weight:** It's best not to purchase a bat which is too heavy for your player. Rather than growing into the bat the player will develop bad habits that will be difficult to correct later on, not to mention poor self esteem because **the overly heavy bat keeps the player from successfully hitting the ball**. As for weight one rule of thumb is for the player to hold the bat in one hand (which ever is the top hand on the bat) and extend it out fully holding this position for at least 8-10 seconds. If the player can't do this the bat is too heavy. If in doubt about two bats it is always better to error on the side of the lighter bat!

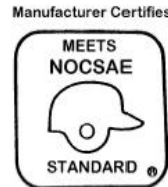
RECOMMENDED BAT WEIGHT BY PLAYER HEIGHT & LBS			
Division	Player Height (inches)	Player Weight (lbs)	Bat Weight (oz)
6U - 8U	48-50"	n/a	15-16 ½ oz
6U - 8U	51-54"	n/a	16-17 oz
6U - 8U	55-60"	n/a	16 ½ -17 ½ oz
8U -10U	n/a	60-80 lbs	16 ½ -17 ½ oz
10U	n/a	60-80 lbs	16 ½ -18 oz
10U - 12U	n/a	81-100 lbs	17 ½ - 19 oz
10U - 12U	n/a	101-120 lbs	18-20 oz
10U - 12U	n/a	121-140 lbs	20-22 oz
10U - 12U	n/a	141+ lbs	21-23 oz
14U	n/a	100 lbs	22 oz
14U	n/a	110 lbs	23 oz
14U	n/a	120 lbs	24 oz
14U	n/a	130 lbs	25 oz
14U	n/a	140 lbs	26 oz
14U	n/a	150 lbs	26 ½ oz

#### Indications that a bat may be too heavy for a player:

1. They are over-powered most of the time by good fastballs.
2. They swing and miss a lot.
3. When they do make contact, balls are hit weakly and to the opposite field more often than up the middle or to the player's pull side (LF for RH hitters; RF for LH hitters).

- **Length:** Generally speaking if the bat is the proper size the player should be able to stand in the batters box in the hitting position and with arms extended and be able to reach the outside edge of the plate. If the bat extends beyond this point it's too long, can't reach this point, it's too short.

## Look for these certification stamps on bats and helmets



PLEASE NOTE: Non-certified bats will likely be removed from play by the umpire. If buying used, there is a rare possibility of obtaining a bat with these stamps that is still non-approved. You can check the USA Softball Equipment webpage if you have any concerns.

There MAY exception to the certification requirement in the 8U division as it can sometimes be difficult to get a light enough bat for younger, smaller players and non-approved tee-ball bats can be found in lighter weights that are better for their development. Understand that exception may not be honored if playing in other leagues, such as during fall ball, and is definitely not approved for All-Stars. There are no requirements enforced for 6U.

### Sliding Shorts (Optional)

Sliding shorts are worn underneath uniform shorts or pants and can give players the confidence to slide without the fear of getting injured. Although they are not required RTGSA recommends them for the 8U division and above. Sliding shorts can be purchased with heavy padding or little padding.

### Ball Sizes

The following balls are used in Rancho Trabuco Girls Softball Association:

- 6U and 8U: 10" (Worth RIF Level 1)
- 10U: 11" (Worth Mid-Seam RIF Level 1)
- 12U and 14U: 12" (Worth Hot Seam in optic yellow)

## **CATCHER'S GEAR (each team will be provided a set of catcher's gear)**

RTGSA provides all catcher gear with the exception of a catcher's glove to each team. If you choose to purchase your own catcher gear here are some guidelines:

- **Catcher's Mitt:** Find a softball catcher's mitt that fits the hand and feels comfortable. It will take a while to break-in a new mitt. DO NOT use a brand new mitt in a game. Catching pitches with a new mitt will be difficult as the ball will constantly pop out. **Break in the new mitt at home and during practice!**
- **Catcher's Helmet:** Make sure the helmet fits and then adjust the straps on the mask so it is snug to the head and helmet. A loose mask is bad. Also, make sure there is some sort of throat protection. Most modern masks are made with an extended throat guard. Helmet and mask must NOCSAE certified and/or ASA approved.
- **Shin Guards:** Shin guards should protect the front of the leg, knee, and top of the foot. When wearing shin guards, the straps should not be too loose or too tight. Do not buy shin guards that are too large for the body, expecting to grow into them. This will only inhibit movement and make the catcher's job more difficult behind the plate.
- **Knee Savers:** Knee Savers are simply triangular pads that are connected to the straps on the back of your shin guards and makes squatting more comfortable and easier on your knees. Catchers DO NOT need Knee Savers and they are NOT a mandatory item. Some catchers like them, some don't. Knee Savers may restrict movement and discourage catchers from learning to be in a higher squat formation when needed.
- **Chest Protector:** The chest protector should fit snugly against your body. There should be no space between any part of your body and the chest protector (this includes while in the squatting position). Some protectors have shoulder guards for extra protection. These are fine if they are removable. You may want to remove the guard on your throwing shoulder so it does not impede your ability to throw.

Look for these certification stamps on bats and helmets



Manufacturer Certifies

