

Junior Cricket Equipment

A Parent's Guide to Choosing the Right Kit



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Bats



Coaches and manufacturers agree that selection of the correct size and weight of bat are crucial to the technical development of a player. Many young players try to play with bats that are too big and/or too heavy, which can inhibit stroke play and timing.

The following table is a guide to choosing the right size of bat with respect to the height of the player. It is distilled from the recommendations of several major bat-makers.

Height of Batsman		Bat Size
Up to 3'11"	Up to 1.19m	0
3'11" to 4'3"	1.19 - 1.30m	1
4'3"- 4'6"	1.30 - 1.37m	2
4'6" - 4'9"	1.37 - 1.45m	3
4'9" - 4'11"	1.45 - 1.50m	4
4'11" - 5'2"	1.50 - 1.57m	5
5'2" - 5'5"	1.57 - 1.65m	6
5'5" - 5'9"	1.65 - 1.75m	Harrow

As a further check of correct bat size, get the player to stand upright, feet together, arms by sides. With the toe of the bat on the ground, bat vertical, the top of the handle should be approximately in line with the position of the wrist-watch strap.

Even more important than size, the correct weight is vital. For the same size of bat there can be noticeable variation in weight. For example, a typical weight range for a size 4 bat is 2lb 1oz to 2lb 3 oz. As an guide, Kashmir willow bats tend to be a couple of ounces heavier than their English willow counterparts.

As an aid to establishing the correct weight the following method may be useful.

Ask the player to hold the bat with a normal batting grip. Then ask him/her to remove the bottom hand and raise the bat and arm to a horizontal position, arm and bat extended sideways and parallel to the ground. If the player cannot hold the bat in this position comfortably and without wavering for 10 seconds the bat is too heavy.

English or Kashmir willow?

Kashmir willow tends to be a little denser and more brittle than English willow, so a Kashmir willow blade will probably be a little heavier for a particular bat size to the tune of a couple of ounces. English willow is generally more responsive when using a hard cricket ball giving better performance, but is more expensive. Willow comes in varying grades, with the lower numbers giving better performance at higher cost, however for younger junior players the difference in grade may not be noticeable.

Preparation and Care of the Bat

Follow the manufacturer's instructions. If none are supplied with the bat, all the major manufacturers have advice on their web-sites. Most bats are now supplied pre-prepared and require little or no further preparation before first use, but follow the advice of the maker.

Style and Shape

Many makers produce bats in various styles intended to suit different types of player by profiling the bat to alter weight distribution. In my opinion this is unlikely to make much difference in the case of a younger junior player. Get the size and weight right, then be guided by what feels right to the player.

2



Helmet

A correctly-fitting and well-adjusted helmet is a key safety feature.

A guide to selecting the right size: Measure the circumference of the head in centimetres using a tape measure placed at the centre of the forehead and running just above the ears.

The following table gives guidance to the correct corresponding helmet size:

51-52 cm	SB (Small Boys)
53-54 cm	B (Boys)
54-56 cm	Y (Youths)

The helmet should sit comfortably but firmly on the head with no excessive movement. The peak should sit horizontally in line with the eyebrows. The grill should be adjusted so that there is no possibility of a junior cricket ball squeezing between grill and peak. The chin strap should be neither too loose nor too tight.

With use the padding will adjust to the shape of the head.

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Pads



A guide to batting pad size selection:

Measure the length in centimetres from the centre of the player's kneecap to the top of the foot, where the tongue of the shoe would be. A guide to the corresponding pad size is given in the table.

30-32 cm	SB (Small boys)
32-35 cm	B (Boys)
36-38 cm	Y (Youths)

With the pad fitted securely and comfortably the player's knee should align with the centre of the knee-roll of the pad. Ensure the straps are of a suitable length such that the pad can be firmly secured.

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Batting Gloves



Measure the length in centimetres from the start of the wrist to the tip of the middle finger and use the table below to aid size selection.

16.5 cm	SB (Small boys)
17.5 cm	B (boys)
19.0 cm	Y (Youths)

These are only approximate, as there is some variation from one maker to another.

Make sure the wrist strap is capable of being fastened securely. Batting gloves come in various grades and wide-ranging prices. The more expensive ones tend to be constructed of better materials, but also may have more segments giving greater flexibility.