

# EQUIPMENT

(Ema)

If your helmet is too big it will fall off. If your glove's too big you'll drop the ball. Make sure your equipment is the right size. It will help you play better ball and protect you from getting hurt.

## BATS

Select a bat, hold it with one hand (right hand if right-handed, left hand if left handed) straight out in front of you, parallel with the ground, keep your arm extended fully and straight out, don't bent your elbow. If after 10 seconds you have a problem keeping the bat stable or you start to feel any weakness, the bat is too heavy for you.

Don't be fooled into thinking that if you use a heavier bat you'll be able to hit the ball farther. It isn't true. The speed of the bat as you swing it is more important than the bat's weight.

*When in doubt always select a lighter bat*, one that you can swing easily, without extra effort. You'll be better able to control your swing and the fat part of the bat will move through the strike zone more quickly. Bat control will help you hit the ball more often *and farther*.

## HELMETS

You have to wear a helmet when batting, running the bases, and coaching the bases, this is a rule and it applies to practices as well as during games.

Make sure your helmet fits snugly, so it doesn't fly off when you swing or when running the bases (while running the bases if your helmet comes off, the umpire can call you OUT!) Your helmet should be big enough for it to rest on the top of your head.

Wearing a face mask on the batting helmet is permitted. If you would be more at ease with a face mask on your helmet you must let your manager know and they should see that it happens.

## GLOVES

Unless you catch or play first base, you'll wear a "fielder's glove" on defense. Outfielders should wear as large a glove as they can and still be able to control the fingers. Infielder's want to wear a small glove, though you should be able to cup your hand inside it comfortably.

### A Special Equipment Tip

**Break in your glove so that the fingers will lie flat on the ground. One of the worst things you can do to your glove is to hold the fingertips against your side. This makes them curve up, and keeps the glove from lying flat when you try to field.**

## ATHLETIC SUPPORTER AND CUP

Little League rules require all male players to wear an athletic supporter. Catchers must also wear a protective cup during practice, warm ups and games. If you've ever been hit in the groin with the baseball, you'll know why these are important. If not, be thankful and take my word for it: it hurts.

## **CATCHER'S GEAR**

By rule the catcher's helmet must be the full type, similar to a batting helmet (skull caps are not permitted in any level of play); the catcher's mask must be worn with a throat guard, this applies to all styles of masks even the hockey type.

The chest protector must be the long type with throat protection and must be worn with the bottom flap out and not tucked under.

The shin guards should fit properly. Don't strap them so tightly that they're uncomfortable. The buckles should always be on the outside of your legs.

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