



CV United Equipment Guide

Gloves

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 in mind that youth gloves are smaller to help kids maintain control. Avoid the urge to buy a bigger glove that your daughter will grow into. Also avoid the plastic variety, which don't break in like leather and are difficult to catch a ball with.

When buying a new glove it is also important to remember that it needs to be broken in. Some sports equipment stores will offer a steaming service for an additional charge, which will hasten the process. Gloves can also be broken in manually using time worn techniques of oiling, banding with a ball in the pocket and putting under a mattress. There are many You tube videos on the subject. Don't neglect this process. By not breaking in a glove, it is tough to expect 6-10 year old girl to consistently catch a thrown softball ball with what is effectively a piece of plywood. You daughter will enjoy their time on the field more if their success and enjoyment is not undermined by ill prepared equipment.

Recommended Glove Size by Division

- 6U:** 9 to 11 inches
- 8U:** 10 to 11 inches
- 10U:** 10½ to 12 inches
- 12U+:** 11½ to 13 inches

Fielding Masks

There is a lot of debate about the necessity of fielding masks for defensive players. While facial injuries are not common, they can be devastating both physically as well as emotionally, especially for a younger, less experienced player. The safety and well being of our players is of the utmost importance to CV United. Therefore, we have adopted the following policy regarding fielding masks.

- 6U:** Masks are not required as our youngest players are just learning to hit the ball. However, its never too soon to start acclimating a player towards wearing a mask.
- 8U:** Masks are required for all defensive players, even those playing the outfield.
- 10U/12U:** Masks are required for all infield positions. They are optional but highly recommended for outfielders.
- 14U:** Masks are optional but strongly recommended for infielders and especially pitchers.



Helmets

All helmets must have a chin strap, face mask and be NOCSAE-certified.

Never use a helmet that is cracked, deformed or if the interior padding has deteriorated. We recommend that children do not share helmets for lice and other concerns.

Cleats

CV United requires all players to wear baseball/softball shoes with plastic or rubber cleats, however soccer shoes with plastic or rubber cleats may be worn. Metal cleats are not allowed by CV United.

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.

Bats

DON'T BUY A BASEBALL BAT! Any bat used must be an ASA-certified softball bat (look for the marking on the barrel). 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 (whichever 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 err on the side of the lighter bat!

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

1. They are overpowered 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 batter's 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. If it can't reach this point, it's too short.

Balls

The following balls are used at CV United:

6U: 10" Easton Incrediball

8U: 10" Worth RIF 1 Sof-Dot

10U: 11" Worth RIF 1 Sof-Dot

12U+: 12" Worth Dream Seam

Equipment Bag

This doesn't have to be fancy, but something to keep their gear in order.

Sliding Shorts

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, CV United recommends them for the 8U division and above. Sliding shorts can be purchased with heavy padding or little padding.

Knee Guards (Sliders)

Sliders provide extra protection when sliding and fielding. They are optional, however CV United recommends them for all divisions.

You can purchase long sliders that cover the knee and shin or short sliders that cover just the knee. Typically younger girls wear two long sliders and older girls wear two short sliders. Some choose to wear just one on the knee that makes contact with the ground during the slide.



Catcher's Gear

CV United provides all catcher gear with the exception of a catcher's glove. 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.