



## JUNIOR CRICKET EQUIPMENT GUIDE

Here is a guide to the cricket equipment that is suitable for junior cricketers. Please read it carefully before you buy cricket equipment for your child.

### PART 1: Softball & Hardball Essentials

#### Bat

The most important thing with a bat is to get one that is the right size and weight. Do not buy a bat in the mistaken belief that your child will “grow into it” – this does not work for cricket bats. Using a bat that is too big can have a seriously negative impact on the development of your child’s cricket. It makes coaching technique and hitting the ball more difficult.

In general, bats should be lightweight. The player must be able to pick it up comfortably and play a few shadow shots. Size 3 & 4 bats should ideally weigh in the 1lb 12oz - 2lbs range. Size 5 & 6 bats should weigh in the range between 1lb 14 oz to 2lb 2oz. Size Harrow (H) bats should weigh between 2lb 2oz – 2lb 6oz. For the taller/bigger players in U15-U17 using a full-size bat, look for one that is no heavier than 2lb 8oz – 2lb 9oz. Please note that brands such as GM have an additional size that fits between a Harrow and full-size bat, called Academy and Small Mens. The Academy and Small Mens size bats feels significantly lighter than a full size and are a great option when playing with a full-size bat may just be too heavy and difficult to play with.

Please remember the pick-up and balance is more important than the scale weight. Often one bat that is heavier on the scales than another bat, can actually feel lighter thanks to the way it’s been made. This is an advantage as weight is what gives the bat power.

Bats vary in quality. The different grade of willow will be reflected in the price. If you buy a bat for under £50 the chances are that it will not be made of English willow but made of Kashmir Willow. Kashmir Willow is fine for softball, but for hardball cricket you should buy an English Willow bat.

Below is an approximate size guide, based on the height of the player:

BAT SIZING CHART	
Height	Bat Size
<4ft	0
4ft - 4ft 3"	1
4ft 3" - 4ft 6"	2
4ft 6" - 4ft 9"	3
4ft 9" - 4ft 11"	4
4ft 11" - 5ft 2"	5
5ft 2" - 5ft 4"	6
5ft 4" - 5ft 6"	H

### *Examples of English willow bats*



*Entry Level  
New Balance TC660*

*Mid Level  
SS Ton Silver Edition*

*Top Level  
SS Ton Reserve Edition*

### **Footwear**

There are two types of cricket footwear. Cricket shoes with a dimpled rubber sole, and cricket shoes with spikes. For most junior players the dimpled sole shoes are good enough and can also be used on artificial surfaces such as astro-turf nets and astro-turf pitches. Spikes are suitable for both medium and fast bowlers as well as those playing hardball cricket in particular, offering additional grip on grass and in wet conditions. As junior players get older (and heavier) spike footwear becomes essential. Please note that **spiked footwear cannot be used in nets or on astro turf pitches**. If you have a pair of spikes you will also need a pair of rubber-soled cricket shoes.

### *Examples of cricket footwear*



*Gray Nicolls Velocity Rubber Sole*

*Adidas Howzat Spiked Sole*

## PART 2: Hardball Essentials

### Helmet

This is the most important piece of equipment when playing hardball cricket - for two reasons; firstly and obviously because it's protecting your child's head and secondly because they will not be allowed to play hardball cricket without wearing one. Cricket helmets have undergone a major transformation in recent years to make them much safer - specifically to avoid facial injuries and concussions. It is important that your helmet adheres to the new safety standard that offers this increased protection. Brand such as, Shrey, Masuri, C&D Albion, GM, Gray-Nicolls and Kookaburra make some of the best helmets available with prices starting from under £40 for a good junior helmet.

*Examples of helmets*



*Entry Level  
C&D Albion Balance*



*Mid Level  
Masuri Test*



*Top Level  
Shrey Masterclass*

### Abdo Guard

This is also known as a box and protects the delicate area between the legs for boys. Boys are not allowed to bat in hardball cricket without one. Broadly speaking most abdo guards are very similar. However, in order for them to fit securely and not move around while batting, you should also purchase a pair of box briefs or cricket boxers – these have a pouch for the box to fit inside.



*Box Briefs  
(with pouch for abdo guard)*



*Abdo Guard*

## Pads

As you will notice, there is a very wide price range you can pay for batting pads. You should look at the standard of cricket being played as a guide to what's appropriate. For beginners at U10 level the popular ambi pads in the £30-£40 range are normally sufficient as the bowling faced will not be as quick. However from around U13 onwards as children get bigger so to does the speed at which the ball is bowled and so impact speeds are higher. It is here that pads in the £45-£60+ price range become more relevant. There two types of pads - ambidextrous and handed ones (e.g., LH or RH). Handed ones offer better protection as they have a bigger protective wing to the pad. As you pay more for pads, they become more protective, more comfortable, lighter and wrap around the leg better making it much easier to run.

### *Examples of batting pads*



*Entry Level*  
*New Balance DC580*



*Mid Level*  
*VKS Superlite*



*Top Level*  
*SS Test Opener*

## Batting Gloves

In cricket the hands are the most vulnerable part of the batsman. The better glove, the more comfortable it will be with better protection - again look to start at around £20 for kids starting out but those playing at a much higher standard or against faster bowling should look at gloves in the £35 - £60 range.

### *Examples of batting gloves*



*Entry Level*  
*New Balance DC580*



*Mid Level*  
*VKS Superlite*



*Top Level*  
*SS Ton Players Edition*

## Thigh Pad

Every player should use a thigh pad - a cricket ball on the thigh is extremely painful even for adults. Thigh pads come in two types - the first is a plain old fashioned thigh pad and the second an all-in-one inner and outer thigh protector. The latter is extremely popular and is very easy to put on - we highly recommend those. Prices for the standard style thigh pad start at around £15 and for the all in one style start at £25.

*Examples of thigh pads*



*Entry Level*  
*Gray Nicolls Academy*



*Mid Level*  
*Aero P3 Strippers*



*Top Level*  
*Aero P2 Strippers*

## In Summary

It is vitally important that cricketers wear the correct equipment when playing, especially in hardball cricket it is a matter of health and safety. Coaches will not let a child take part in hardball training or matches if they are not suitably attired. Equipment should offer the appropriate level of protection for the standard of cricket being played and should at all times fit properly. Finally, if in doubt, speak to one of the coaches or visit Vee Kay Sports (VKS) in Ealing to get some expert advice and fitting in store to ensure your child has the correctly fitted equipment.

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