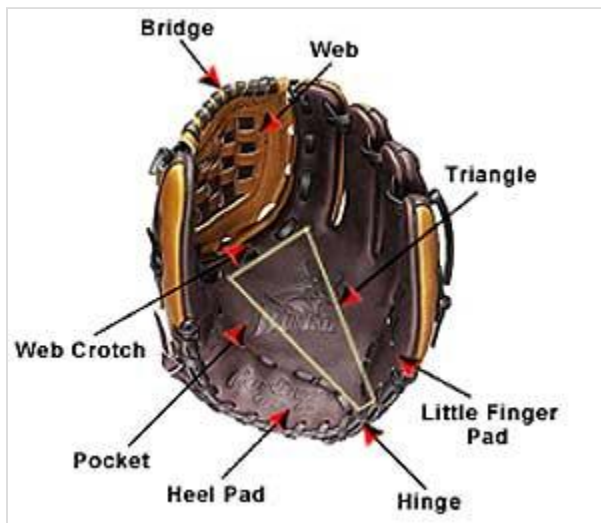


Baseball Glove Guide



How to Measure a Glove

Baseball gloves are measured by starting at the top of the index finger of the glove and measuring down the finger, along the inside of the pocket and then out to the heel of the glove. Use a flexible tape and allow it to "lay" in the pocket as you measure. For first base mitts (which have no fingers) simply measure from the highest point on the mitt in the same fashion as a fielders glove. All gloves are referenced for size by inches. Typically baseball gloves have a range from 9 inches (youth starter size) to 12.75 inches for adult outfield play. Catchers mitt sizes while expressed in inches are measured by circumference. Typically a baseball catchers mitt will measure in circumference from 30 inches (youth size) up to 34.5 inches with .5 inch incremental sizes in this range.

Use the chart below as a guide to determine which glove size is best for the age range of the player.

Please note that youth ball gloves are smaller scale gloves than high school/adult model gloves, so an 11 inch youth model will be smaller than an adult 11 inch model.

Age	Position	Glove Size
5 - 6	All	10 - 10.5 Inch Youth Models
7 - 8	All	10.5 - 11 Inch Youth Models
9 - 12	All	11 - 11.5 Inch Youth Models
High School /Adult	Infield	11 - 11.5 Inch
High School / Adult	Outfield	12 - 12.5 Inch

Glove Quality

The highest quality gloves are usually made of heavy leather that will need some time to break-in, provide a "snug" fit on your hand right "off the shelf" and typically do not have palm pads or Velcro adjustable wrist straps which are excellent features to have if one is buying a youth or recreational type glove.

- Top-grain and generally will be imprinted by the manufacturer on your glove. These are typically heavier gloves requiring a longer break in time and are used almost exclusively in "top of the line" gloves.
- Kip leather (Kipskin) has recently started being used by some glove manufacturer's in some of their high end gloves. Kip leather (Kipskin) hide is from younger cattle producing a softer leather easier to break-in. Whether durability is the same as with traditional hides remains to be seen.
- The next grade is Premium Steer Hide which tends to produce a stiff glove with a longer break-in time and is sometimes pre-oiled to reduce this time.
- Cow Hide which is usually medium weight, produces a wide range of quality, breaks in faster and wears out faster than steer hide. This grade usually comes pre-oiled or treated to reduce break-in time. This is an excellent grade for a youth glove ages 10 and up.
- Kangaroo Skin, a newcomer to the baseball glove market, is being used by some manufacturer's. While stronger and lighter than steer hide its too early to tell how good an investment gloves made of Kangaroo are. The last grade is
- Pigskin which is far less durable than cowhide. It does however, break in far quicker and easier than cowhide. Gloves made of Pigskin are inexpensive and are great for younger players who will grow out of their glove in a season.

Baseball gloves are also available in a variety of synthetic materials which produce a lighter glove requiring little if any break-in, are less expensive than leather and can be a good choice for a youngster's "starter" glove. The downside of these gloves is they are considerably less-durable than leather and simply will not withstand the wear and tear leather will.

Gloves vs Mitts The main difference between gloves and mitts is that gloves have fingers and mitts don't. Mitts tend to do a better job of controlling balls that don't hit in the pocket and can aid scooping ground balls and short hops. 1st base and catcher are the only positions which use mitts.

Youth Gloves

Perhaps the most important point in this section is to avoid the temptation to buy a glove that is to "large" for the person using it with the thought in mind "they will grow into it". What will actually happen is the player will get discouraged and want to quit after the glove falls off his hand a couple of times or you'll get discouraged and either go buy another glove the right size or wonder why

"little Johnny" can't keep his glove on like the rest of the guys. Either way its a lose-lose proposition. Buy the right size the first time and avoid needless pain.

First Base Mitts

Most first base mitts are designed for baseball use and measure between 12 and 13 inches. First base mitts usually have a thin but stiff pad that runs around the circumference of the mitt with little or no padding in the palm or finger area. First base mitts made specifically for youth players generally will measure 11 to 11.5 inches.

Catcher's Mitts

Baseball catcher's mitts usually have a thick pad around the circumference of the mitt with thick padding in the finger area and less padding in the palm area. The pocket in a modern catchers mitt is somewhat larger but more shallow than it used to be with the modern catchers glove being more flexible and evolving towards a first base mitt look alike as the quickness of the ball to hand transfer for a catcher is critical. Catchers mitts range in circumference from 31 inches to 34 inches with .5 inch incremental sizes in this range. Youth catcher mitts most typically are in the 31 to 32 inch range and if made specifically for youth players will have a smaller hand opening and finger stalls with some type of wrist adjustment.

Open vs Closed Web

- Open Web: Most typically preferred by middle infielders, first basemen and some outfielders. An open web helps get the ball out of the glove quicker.
- Closed Web: Preferred by pitchers, third basemen and most outfielders. Pitchers like the closed web to help hide the ball from the batter while third basemen and outfielders like the additional support a closed web provides.

Conventional or Open Back vs Closed Back

Mainly a matter of style and personal preference. Conventional back gloves leave a space open across the back of the glove and tends to be somewhat lighter.

Some closed back gloves have a wrist adjustment which allows you to adjust how tight or loose the glove fits. Conventional or Open back: Preferred by infielders and catchers because of the flexibility.

Closed back: Mostly preferred by outfielders and first basemen. Many outfielders closed back gloves have a "finger hole" which adds additional support.

Break-In & Care

For whatever reason there exists more theories on the proper way to break-in and care for a baseball glove than we have the space to explore. Most of these theories are, at best, anecdotal and bear no resemblance to the proper care of leather which, obviously baseball gloves are made from. The first thing to bear in mind is we are talking about "leather" and regardless of what you may have heard or read in the past there are some absolute don't's when it comes to caring for your newly purchased baseball glove. Lets start with the break-in process.

Break-In:

Depending on the type of leather your glove is made of the length of time will vary between several days and a couple of weeks. The more you play catch with your new glove the quicker it will break-in. We've read of one person who actually took his new glove to the batting cages, purchased a couple of buckets of balls and rather than hitting them he caught them, repeating this process over several days helped speed up the process. Some people think prior to using the glove for the first time you should apply a small amount of Glove Oil to the glove, if you choose to do this that's okay. Use a Glove Oil or Conditioner made specifically for baseball gloves, here is a list of some generally well accepted products.

- [Nokona NLT Classic Glove Conditioner](#)
- [Louisville Slugger LSC Glove Cream Glove Conditioner](#)
- [Wilson A6764 Premium Baseball Glove Oil](#)