

RULE 3 - EQUIPMENT

PREAMBLE TO RULE 3: Rule 3 governs the equipment to be used in USA Softball Championship Play. Equipment bearing USA Softball's approved certification mark(s) should not be construed as a warranty or guarantee that the equipment is safe or will safeguard participants or spectators from injury. Instead, USA Softball's certification marks merely indicate that the equipment model has been tested and complies with USA Softball's rules for Championship Play. The primary purpose of Rule 3 and USA Softball's equipment standards is to promote competitive balance and to preserve the integrity of the sport of amateur softball. The use of USA Softball approved equipment in Championship Play or otherwise should not be considered a guarantee that participants, spectators or others will be safe or free from injury or harm. There are risks and dangers incidental to the game of softball including specifically, but not limited to, the danger of being injured by thrown bats, thrown balls, batted balls or other objects.

SECTION 1 - OFFICIAL BAT

A. CERTIFIED/APPROVED: The official bat for USA Softball Championship Play must meet all the USA Softball specifications and the requirements of Rule 3, Section 1, and:

- The official bat, made up of the knob, handle, grip, taper, barrel and end cap shall be free of burrs, dents, cracks, sharp edges, rattles and show no signs of excessive wear. The official bat may be marked OFFICIAL SOFTBALL by the manufacturer, and shall be no more than 34 inches long nor exceed 38 ounces in weight. The official bat shall not be more than 2.250 inches in diameter at its largest part, including any tolerance for expansion. The Official bat must bear either the ASA 2000 Certification Mark, ASA 2004 Certification Mark, or ASA 2013 Certification Mark (Slow Pitch, Men's Adult Fast Pitch, Junior Olympic Boy's Fast Pitch and Men's Modified only), as shown below and must not be listed on the USA Softball Non-Approved Bat List with 2000 or 2004 Certification Mark.



AND

- must be included on a list of approved bat models published by USA Softball
- OR**
- must, in the sole opinion and discretion of the umpire, have been manufactured prior to 2000 and if tested, would comply with the USA Softball Bat Performance

Standard. This includes wooden bats.

Exception: Senior Softball bats may be used in Senior Championship Play only.

- SAFETY KNOB:** The knob shall have a diameter of at least 1.6 inches with no sharp edges. The knob will be permanently attached to the bat and may be covered with grip tape.
- HANDLE:** The region of the bat from the knob, not including the knob, to the start of the taper where the diameter increases. The handle will include a grip.
- GRIP:** The Handle region of the bat must have a grip made of cork, grip tape, or other synthetic material that is permanently attached to the bat. No bare metal, wood or composite material may be exposed in this area. The grip shall not be less than 6" and not more than 15" from the knob. Any attachment such as a molded finger grip, flare cone or choke up device must be attached with grip tape. Resin, pine tar or spray substances are permissible on the grip region only.
- TAPER:** The transition area between the handle and the barrel. The taper shall have a generally conical shape. It starts where the barrel decreases in size and ends where the handle diameter becomes constant.
- BARREL:** The region of the bat from the taper to the end cap, not including the end cap. The barrel region shall be smooth and round within 0.050 inches in diameter.
- END CAP:** The cap placed at the barrel end of the bat. The end cap shall be permanently affixed to the bat to prevent alterations to the interior of the bat. It shall be affixed so that it cannot be removed by anyone other than the manufacturer without damaging or destroying the end cap or barrel.
- ALTERED BAT:** An USA Softball Official Bat's characteristics shall remain fixed at the time of manufacture and may not be altered in any way other than specifically provided for in Rule 3, Section 1 or as specifically approved by USA Softball. Approved bats shall be considered altered if they are rolled, shaved, repainted, weighted or modified to change their characteristics from that produced by the manufacturer. Identifying the bat by means of laser marking, engraving, or painting the name or number of the player will not make the bat an altered bat.
- CONSTRUCTION:** The official bat shall be of one piece construction, multi-piece permanently assembled or two-piece interchangeable construction. If the bat is designed with interchangeable components it must meet the following additional criteria:
 - Mating components must have a unique locking key to prevent uncertified equipment combinations in the field.
 - All component combinations must meet the one-piece bat rules.
 - Manufacturer must demonstrate that the interchangeable bat fails in a safe manner (i.e. visible damage before locking feature(s) fail(s)).
 - Bat components must be designed in a way to prevent uncertified equipment alterations.

Note: If the bat is not constructed of wood, and not made of one-piece construction