

Bats: How to pick 'em and grip 'em

by: Michele Smith

- **The correct length of a bat is found by:**

- Have your athlete stand upright with her arms hanging straight down by her side.

- Rest a bat along side her arm, with the head of the bat on the ground. A good length bat should find the knob of the bat reaching between the middle of the palm of the hand and the wrist. If the bat reaches above the wrist, it is too long. If the bat reaches below the middle of the palm, it is too short.

- The weight of the bat is determined by the length. Today's bats are mostly 10 ounce, 9 ounce and 8 ounce drops. For example, a bat that is a 10 ounce drop would have a length of 32 inches, and 22 ounces. A 9 ounce drop would be a 32 inch, 23 ounce bat, and an 8 ounce drop is 32 inches and 24 ounces.

- **The correct grip, so you can let it rip:**

- As shown in pictures 1 & 2 below, the knocking knuckles should be lined up. Slightly off center is acceptable as in the 2nd picture.

- The Knocking knuckles are the knuckles used to knock on a door.

- A proper grip is the first step necessary for starting a proper swing.

- Using this grip will help keep the bat in the fingers and allow for a greater amount of bat head speed in the swing.



Picture 1- correct grip



Picture 2: correct grip, slightly off center

- An incorrect grip is shown in Picture 3. Notice that the correct knuckles are not lined up. This will allow the bat to be too far back in the hand, and decrease wrist movement. The result is the ball will not "jump" off the bat at contact.



Picture 3: Incorrect Grip