

Baseball Australia's new bat rules for the 2015/16 season onwards

Baseball Australia has recently agreed on the introduction of new bat rules with all States and Territories. These new rules will come into effect from 1st September 2015 and will apply to all club, State and National games from that point onwards. These new rules are adopted directly from Little League International and as such ensure that Australian players are using the same equipment as players from around the world.

There are some important changes to the rules for some age groups that will impact on some bats already in use and must be understood by all players looking to purchase new bats for next season. As such it is vital that you understand the rules that apply to your age group when purchasing a new bat. If you are not sure about these rules in any way, ask your club for clarification before making a purchase.

Little League and under (U12 and younger players)

<u>New rule</u>	<p>The bat must be a baseball bat, which meets Little League specifications, and standards as noted in this rule. It shall be a smooth, rounded stick and made of wood or of material and colour tested and proved acceptable to Little League standards.</p> <p>Little League (Majors) and below: it shall not be more than thirty three (33) inches in length nor more than two and one--- quarter (2 1/4 inches in diameter). Non-wood bats shall be labelled with a BPF (bat performance factor) of 1.15 or less.</p> <p>EXCEPTION: Little League (Majors) and below, for regular season play and Tournament, composite barrel bats are prohibited unless approved by Little League International. A list of approved and licensed composite barrel bats can be found on the Little League website at: http://www.littleleague.org/learn/equipment/licensedcompositebats.htm.</p>
<u>What has changed</u>	Nothing has changed from the Baseball Queensland rules in force for the 2014/15 season.
<u>Implications</u>	All players There are no new implications of these rules, however, it is important that players understand that any bats with composite barrels and/or handles must be listed on the Little League International licensed bats list in order to be legal for play.

Intermediate and Junior League (U14 players)





<u>New rule</u>	<p>It shall not be more than 34 inches in length; nor more than 2 5/8 inches in diameter, and if wood, not less than fifteen-sixteenths (15/16) inches in diameter (7/8 inch for bats less than 30") at its smallest part.</p> <p>All composite barrel bats shall meet the Batted Ball Coefficient of Restitution (BBCOR) performance standard, and such bats shall be so labelled with a silkscreen or other permanent certification mark. The certification mark shall be rectangular, a minimum of a half-inch on each side and located on the barrel of the bat in any contrasting colour.</p> <p>If a 2 1/4" barrel bat has no composite materials, it may be used provided it is</p>
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	labelled with a BPF (bat performance factor) of 1.15 or less. (NOTE: Solid wooded barrel bats do not require a BPF label.)
What has changed	Any bat with a composite barrel must now meet the BBCOR standard (see this link for further explanation).
Implications	<p>Players moving up from Little League For players with a 2 1/4 inch composite barrel bat that is listed on the Little League website and is therefore legal for play in the Little League and below age groups, these bats will not be legal for play at Intermediate and Junior league as they are not tested against the BBCOR standard.</p> <p>All new and existing Intermediate and Junior league players Any bat with a composite barrel must meet the BBCOR standard. As at March 2015 the only composite bats available which are tested against the BBCOR standard have a drop of -3 and as such are likely to be too heavy for nearly all players in this age group.</p>

Senior and Big League (U16 and U18 players)

New rule	<p>It shall not be more than 36 inches in length, nor more than 2 5/8 inches in diameter, and if wood, not less than fifteen-sixteenths (15/16) inches in diameter (7/8 inch for bats less than 30") at its smallest part.</p> <p>The bat shall not weigh, numerically, more than three ounces less than the length of the bat (e.g., a 33-inch- long bat cannot weigh less than 30 ounces).</p> <p>All bats not made of a single piece of wood shall meet the Batted Ball Coefficient of Restitution (BBCOR) performance standard, and such bats shall be so labelled with a silkscreen or other permanent certification mark. The certification mark shall be rectangular, a minimum of a half-inch on each side and located on the barrel of the bat in any contrasting colour. Aluminium/alloy and composite bats shall be marked as to their material makeup being aluminium/alloy or composite. This marking shall be silkscreen or other permanent certification mark, a minimum of one-half- inch on each side and located on the barrel of the bat in any contrasting colour.</p>
What has changed	<p>Baseball Queensland's rules for U16 competition players for the 2014/15 season permitted the use of bats with a drop of -5. This rule has been changed such that all players at both age groups must now use bats with a drop of -3 or heavier.</p> <p>All bats with a barrel made of anything other than wood must meet the BBCOR standard (see this link for further explanation).</p>
Implications	<p>Brisbane Metro has specifically confirmed with Baseball Queensland that the rule relating to the drop of the bat does require -3 or heavier bats to be used. This will impact any existing Junior League and older players who are using bats with a drop of -5 as these bats will not be legal for play.</p> <p>The requirement for all non-wooden bats to meet the BBCOR standard will impact any players in Baseball Queensland's 2014/15 U16 and U18 competitions who have bats that do not meet this requirement despite meeting the length and weight requirements.</p>

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Player's age group	Length	Weight	Diameter		Certification standards		
			Barrel	Handle	Wooden	Metal	Composite
Little League and younger (U12 and younger)	33 inches or less	There are no bat weight limits specified for any age groups, however, as at March 2015 the only bats which are certified against the BBCOR standard have a drop of -3	2 1/4 inches	Not specified	None	Labelled with a Bat Performance Factor of 1.15 or less 	Must be listed on Little League International's approved bat list.
Intermediate League and Junior League (U14)	34 inches or less		Not more than 2 5/8 inches	Wood bats: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 7/8 inch for bats less than 30 inches long, • 15/16 inch for bats 30 inches or longer All other bats: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • not specified 	None	Bats with a 2 1/4 inch barrel: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • must be labelled with a Bat Performance Factor of 1.15 or less All other bats: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • not specified 	BBCOR rated 
Senior League and Big League (U16 and U18)	36 inches or less		Not more than 2 5/8 inches	Wood bats <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 7/8 inch for bats less than 30 inches long, • 15/16 inch for bats 30 inches or longer All other bats: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • not specified 	None	BBCOR rated 	BBCOR rated 