



2018 Bat Standards

Implementation of USABat Standard Begins on January 1, 2018

USA Baseball, the national governing body for the sport of baseball in the U.S., in conjunction with participating national member organizations (NMOs) announced the decision to adopt a new method for measuring bat performance in the testing of youth bats. Informed by the research of leading scientists on the USA Baseball Bat Study Committee, and supported by **Babe Ruth Baseball/Cal Ripken Baseball**, Dixie Youth Baseball, Little League Baseball and PONY Baseball -- USA Baseball has concluded that recent advancements in science, engineering, technology, and the materials available to fabricate non-wood bats, now allow the manufacturers to construct youth bats that can perform at a wood-like level through the entire range of lengths and weights of youth bats.

The new USA Baseball bat standard (**USABat**), will be implemented on **January 1, 2018**, allowing the bat manufacturers sufficient time to bring these bats to the marketplace.

The Cal Ripken Division of Babe Ruth League, Inc. have approved the use of the 2 5/8 inch barrel bats for local league play and tournament play beginning in January 2018 and coinciding with the new USA Bat standard.

Similar to the NCAA and NFHS BBCOR standard, which helped to eliminate discrepancies with different length bats and thus provide a more direct measure of bat performance, the new USA Baseball bat standard will allow youth baseball organizations in the United States to reach their goal of establishing a wood-like standard, a standard that will provide for the long-term integrity of the game.

Frequently Asked Questions about the **USABat** standard:

Which national member organizations are implementing this new standard?

To date, the following organizations are participating (in alphabetical order): American Amateur Baseball Congress (AABC), Amateur Athletic Union (AAU), **Babe Ruth Baseball/Cal Ripken Baseball**, Dixie Youth Baseball, Little League Baseball and PONY Baseball.

What's wrong with the bats we're using now?

According to **USABaseball.com** the rationale for the new regulations is that "a wood-like performance standard will provide for the long-term integrity of the game. Translation, in other words, they're trying to level the playing field for batters and pitchers because some composite bats have gotten too "hot," (powerful) creating an unfair advantage for batters using them.

Is my current bat good for league play?

Probably not. Current bats that are not stamped **USABat** will not be allowed for league play or postseason Cal Ripken play.

How will I know which bat to buy?

All new bats that bear the **USABat** licensing mark will be permissible for play in the leagues and tournaments of the participating youth baseball organizations.

When can I buy the new bat?

The new bats are available in the fall of 2017, in sufficient time for the 2018 season.

Are wood bats allowed?

In the Junior League (13-14) & up, wood bats that bear the **USABat** licensing mark will be permissible for play in the leagues and tournaments of the participating youth baseball organizations.

What about tee ball bats?

Unlike standard youth baseball bats, tee ball bats (lengths 26" and shorter) are not required to undergo lab testing to receive approval under the USABat Program.

Senior League, ages 15-18 will not be affected by the new rules. The current BBCOR Standards remain in place.

PENALTY FOR USING NON-COMPLIANT BAT

- If the illegal bat is discovered prior to a batter completing his "at bat" the bat is simply removed from play and the "at bat" continues.
 - A player who uses an illegal bat or non-conforming barrel dimension and hits a fair ball will be ruled out. No advancement on the bases will be allowed, and any outs during the play shall stand. This is an appeal play. The "at bat" will be considered legal once a pitch is thrown to the next batter.
 - Any bat discovered prior to the game that does not conform to the above rule shall be directed to be removed immediately and not be allowed for use during the game.
-
- The logos on the bats will look like this:

