



Western Region UIC Clinic

Little League - Junior League - Senior League - Big League - Challenger Division



WHY NOT USE DENTED BATS?

Several reasons. The first is that the rules of baseball specifically say that a bat that is not round and smooth is not legal for use. There's your number one killer reason right there.

The aluminum bats of today are extremely thin-walled. Their entire structural integrity depends on the fact that the roundness of the bat makes the bat compress and then expand back in a trampoline effect at the moment of contact. A dented bat does not do this properly; it has had its entire structure compromised. Believe it or not, they can and will split, or even shatter (extremely dangerous). Umpires, Tournament directors, or any other officials are to remove any bat that shows signs of stress fractures in the metal, or any form of structural damage, like a dent or flat spot.

In addition, there's a pragmatic reason as well. The trampoline effect that gives the bat "oomph." When you remove the trampoline effect, the bat will perform significantly worse. If you catch the ball right on the flat spot, odds are, you're looking at an infield dribbler, easy out, or if it catches the edge of the dent, maybe a pop fly.

Simply put, the bat has been compromised in a big way and is very unlikely to perform the way the manufacturer wanted it to. Most new bats carry a one-year warranty and the bat manufacturers are more than willing to replace a bat that fails within that time period. Save yourself the hassle and send the bat in for a replacement.

Many people feel the newest bats on the market are not as durable as those in the past. Unfortunately with the costs of modern aluminum and composite bats reaching into the \$200+ mark, it is sad that along with that comes the fact that bats are overused which reduces the maximum life of the bat. You might want to avoid using the higher priced bats in the batting cages. Batting cage bats use heavy non-compressing material that will last longer in the cage. Great for the machines, and terrible for the bats. Don't bang your bat on the ground or against the fence in frustration. That'll kill it fast. Avoid using the bat in cold weather, the colder the weather; the more likely the bat will be damaged. More coaches prefer to train with wooden bats in cages and soft toss, switching to the aluminum bats for game time.

I would be a good idea to have one set of bats for the cages, heavier with thicker aluminum, and one set for game time (i.e., the expensive ones). Manufacturers come out with new bats every year. You can buy last year's model at *dramatic* reductions in price. They'll drop from \$200 to under \$100 in that year, yet it's the same "gotta have" bat that is was the previous year.