

Sizing and Selection Guide for Junior Racquets



A properly sized racket will help your child excel at tennis.

The racquet is junior's most important piece of gear. A correctly fitting racquet helps junior learn the right techniques, offers power and minimizes the risk of injuries of the wrist, elbow, and shoulder.

Beginners won't have enough feel for tennis strokes to be able to make a firm decision based on an on-court demo, but if a junior is completely torn between two sizes of racquets, here's a test that might help him decide. Have him hold the racquet behind him so that the tip touches his lower back and his elbow is the highest part of his arm. Have him raise the racquet overhead, much as if he were serving, but with a slow swing. If the racquet is going to be too heavy for him, this is where he'll feel it.

Juniors can outgrow racquets quickly, but it helps a lot that junior racquets tend to be inexpensive. Very nice junior racquets at a pro shop will run roughly \$20 to \$50, and **some** of the \$10 racquets at the big discount chains are quite good, too. When you look at the least expensive racquets, one crude test is to bang the strings on the butt of your hand to get a feel for their solidity. Avoid racquets that seem lighter or more flexible than the others in the bottom end of the price range.

The Racquet - Junior's Most Important Partner On-Court

Basic guidance to help you and your junior pick the right one, at every age and stage of tennis development:

| Mansion Select's Easy Racquet Sizing & Selection Guide | | | | |
|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------|---------------------|
| Step A | Step B | Step C | | |
| Height (H) feet-inches | Arm Length (A) inches | Skill Level | Racquet Length (L) inches | Racquet Selection |
| 3-10 or less | 21 or less | Off-Court Development | - | <u>Hand Racquet</u> |
| | | Introductory | 19 | |
| | | Introductory | 21 | |
| 3-11 to 4-5 | 22 to 23 | Introductory | 23 | |
| 4-6 to 4-11 | 24 to 26 | Introductory | 25 | |
| | | Advanced | 26 | |
| Helpful Notes: | | | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • H is height of player • A is arm length, armpit to fingertips • Between H and A, select the measurement that gives you a longer racquet. | | | | |

- If your child is five years or younger and/or 3 feet 11 inches or shorter, then the right junior tennis racquet for him or her is one with a 19 inch to 21 inch frame.
- If your child is between five and six years old and/or 3 feet 11 inches. A light weight of 7 ounces and a head size of 91 sq. in. or so is good. Try out a grip size of about 3 and $\frac{3}{4}$ inches.
- For children ages 6 to 8 and/or 3 foot 11 inches to 4 foot 6 inches should use a 23 inch frame.
- If your child is over 4 foot 2 inches, consider a 25 inch frame with about a 100 square inch head (or more). This size is good if your child is getting closer to ready for an adult size racquet but still needs the lighter weight, balance, and maneuverability of a junior tennis racquet.
- A 26" frame is the right size for children around 8 to 12 years of age and around 4 foot 6 to 5 feet tall. A weight of nearly 8 ounces is fine.

Junior Racquets: Need To Know Facts

- As a general principle, select as long a racquet as junior can comfortably handle. Junior will develop smooth strokes with good weight transfer. Too small a racquet allows excessive wrist and elbow action, which can harm both technique and arm, in the long run. The racquet length (L) is measured from the end of the racquet butt (bottom of handle) to the tip of the head.
- Grip Size: While length and weight determine swinging comfort, a racquet has to be comfortable to grip, too. The grip size is measured as the perimeter of the octagonal cross-section of the handle. Junior grips range between 3 to 4 inches. Measure from tip of ring finger (i.e., fourth from thumb) to the first long crease on the palm. This is junior's ideal grip size (T). For maximum gripping comfort, racquet grip size can range between T and T + 1/16". If the racquet grip size is slightly less, a thin overgrip can be taped on to increase the grip and make the hold more comfortable.
- In sizing and selecting racquets for juniors, remember to keep pace with the kid's growth. And watch them perform at their very best, at every age and phase of tennis development.
- A competitive player would need at least two racquets, in case the string breaks during the match.
- Materials: A racquet frame is usually made from graphite and fiberglass, mixed with a plastic resin. Sometimes materials such as titanium and kevlar are added to increase stiffness and reduce weight.