

WEIGHT GOALS FOR BASEBALL PLAYERS

A Parent's Guide: Gaining and Losing Weight Safely in a Growing Athlete

Written in plain language, with links to the research behind it

Somewhere in most recruiting journeys, a coach or a showcase evaluation says a player needs to "get bigger" or "lean out." This guide explains how our Weight Target Tool turns that vague comment into a safe, specific plan, what the science says about weight change in adolescent athletes, and the hard limits we built in on purpose.

Where Our Targets Come From

Most sites quote the average size at each level. We think that number is close to useless, because a player cannot change their height. Instead, our tool compares a player only against rostered college players at their own height, level, and position group, using published rosters from about 1,470 college programs. The target it shows is a range, the middle 50 percent of those real players, built from medians so that a few sloppy listed weights cannot distort it.

A range, not a single number, is the honest answer. Bodies at the same height and position vary, and listed roster weights carry noise in both directions.

Common Beliefs, Checked Against the Science

BELIEF: "He needs to bulk up fast before the season."

FACT: Weight gained faster than roughly a pound a week is mostly fat, not muscle. The International Society of Sports Nutrition's review of diets and body composition supports gradual surpluses paired with strength training as the way muscle is actually built.

Our tool caps every gaining timeline at one pound a week. A 20 pound target is a two-season project, not a summer project, and that is the truthful answer.

BELIEF: "Cutting weight will make him faster."

FACT: In a study of elite athletes, the group losing weight slowly (about 0.7 percent of body weight per week) kept and even gained strength, while the faster-cutting group lost lean mass. Aggressive cutting costs the exact strength a player is trying to show off.

Worse, sustained under-fueling in a young athlete can become Relative Energy Deficiency in Sport (RED-S), which the International Olympic Committee links to hormone disruption, weaker bones, more injuries, and worse performance in both sexes.

BELIEF: "Body fat percentage is the number to track."

FACT: Consumer body fat measurements (scales, handheld devices) carry large errors, and fixating on the number is a known risk factor for disordered eating in teens. We never use body fat percentages, and we never show before and after photos.

The numbers that matter for recruiting are exit velocity, the 60, and throwing velocity. Those are the ones our tools track.

BELIEF: "The tool said no. It must be broken."

FACT: The refusals are the point. The tool will not build a weight-loss plan for a player under 16, will not accept a goal below the CDC growth-chart floor for the player's height and age, and will not build any plan faster than

one pound a week.

A growing athlete who wants to change weight in either direction should start that conversation with you and their doctor, not with a website, ours included.

What Safe Change Actually Looks Like

- **Gaining:** 250 to 500 extra calories a day, protein at about 0.8 grams per pound of body weight, strength training, and 8 to 9 hours of sleep. That produces 0.5 to 1 pound a week, mostly muscle.
- **Leaning out (16 and older only):** a small calorie deficit with protein kept high, at one pound a week or slower, watching strength numbers weekly. Falling strength means the cut is too fast.
- **Either direction:** weigh once a week under the same conditions, and re-measure the target range every 90 days, because a growing body moves inside it.

The Warning Signs That Outrank Everything

If food or weight has become a fight in your house, treat that as the priority, not the roster. Watch for: eating alone or in secret · cutting entire food groups · dramatic swings in weight · obsessive weighing or mirror checking · training through exhaustion or injury to "earn" food · mood changes tied to the scale. The National Alliance for Eating Disorders runs a free helpline staffed by licensed therapists: **1-866-662-1235**, allianceforeatingdisorders.com. Eating disorders affect boys as well as girls, and athletes at higher rates than non-athletes.

Bottom Line

A weight target built from real rosters, reached at a pound a week with a doctor in the loop, is a training goal. Anything faster, anything below the growth-chart floor, or anything driven by body fat numbers and photos is a health risk wearing a baseball uniform. Our tool draws those lines automatically; this guide is so you know where they are and why.

Sources and Further Reading

- International Society of Sports Nutrition Position Stand: Diets and Body Composition (NIH/PMC): <https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC5470183/>
- Effect of Two Different Weight-Loss Rates on Body Composition and Performance in Elite Athletes (NIH/PubMed): <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/21558571/>
- IOC Consensus Statement: Relative Energy Deficiency in Sport, RED-S (NIH/PubMed): <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/24620037/>
- CDC Growth Charts, the reference behind our safety floor: <https://www.cdc.gov/growthcharts/>
- National Alliance for Eating Disorders, free clinician-staffed helpline: <https://www.allianceforeatingdisorders.com/>

This guide is education, not medical advice or a diagnosis. Weight change in a growing athlete belongs in a conversation with their doctor, their athletic trainer, or a registered dietitian.

The range tool, the CDC floor and the timeline your player used are at uncommittedu.com/weight-targets. Free, no account.