

# Sports Taping

The use of strapping tape and sports strapping techniques can help prevent injuries, reduce the severity of an injury should one occur and aid in the recovery and rehabilitation process following an injury.

There are many different types of strapping tapes, and using the correct strapping tape plays a vital role in the effectiveness of the strapping.

When choosing which type of tape to use, there are three key questions to consider:

1. What joint or part of the body is being strapped?
2. What am I trying to achieve with the strapping?
3. Does the athlete have an allergy to tape?

Tape comes in a range of sizes from 12.5mm up to 75mm, so not every roll of tape will be appropriate for the part of the body or joint you are strapping. When selecting what size tape to use, choose a size that will easily fit the contours of the joint you are strapping and can comfortably be overlapped by 50% to 1/3 for reinforcement. The below table provides a guide to choosing the most suitable size tape.

It is important to remember that every athlete is different and what worked for one athlete may not work for another. Checking in with the athlete about how the tape feels, any discomfort, pinching, or tape cuts is vital to ensure effective strapping.

Sports tape can be classified into two broad categories elastic and rigid. Rigid tape provides a more significant restriction of movement than elastic tape and is the most used type of strapping tape. Elastic tape is an excellent source of compression and is often used as a lock over rigid tape on highly mobile joints, such as the shoulder. Elastic tape is also used when compression and proprioception are the aims of taping, rather than movement restriction.

It is important to note that elastic tapes are available in hand-tearable and non-hand-tearable offerings. While hand tearable is convenient, hand tearable tapes often are not as strong as the non-hand-tearable variation and may not be suitable for locking down knee and shoulder taping. Different brands refer to the non-hand-tearable variation by different names, i.e. Elastoband light, Elastic Adhesive Bandage, Stretch Band Plus, and Leukoband. Hand tearable tape is a convenient, easy to use option in wound management to help secure dressings.

Standard sizes and types of table available

Tape Size	Tape Type	Use
12.5mm	Rigid	Fingers
25mm	Rigid	Fingers & thumbs
38mm	Rigid	Ankle, shoulder, knee, wrist, low dye
50mm	Rigid	Large knees & shoulders
25mm	Elastic	Fingers & thumbs
50mm	Elastic	Ankle, shoulder, knee, wrist, compression on smaller limbs
75mm	Elastic	Large knees & shoulders, Achilles, compression on larger limbs

## What about allergies?

Many strapping tapes, both rigid and elastic, contain latex. Latex can cause an allergic reaction in some individuals. Allergic reactions are often characterised by itching, a sensation of burning or warmth, a rash, general discomfort and, in severe reactions, blistering. There are a small number of rigid tapes which are latex-free. These tapes can be used on an individual with a latex allergy. If a latex-free tape is not available, an adhesive (latex-free) or foam under wrap should be used.



## Types and Sizes of Strapping Tape



12.5mm Rigid tape



25mm Elastic tape



25mm Rigid tape



50mm Elastic tape



38mm Rigid tape



75mm Elastic tape



50mm Rigid tape