

HITTING DRILLS

FOR ALL AGES

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THE SHORTEN YOUR SWING FOR POWER DRILL

This drill is used to shorten-up a hitters swing. If the batter is too long to the ball or has that A to B to C swing that is considered a slow-pitch softball swing, drills can be used to make the hitter shorten up.

1. The batter sets up with his hands 8 to 10 inches from the fence with the fence behind the batter.
2. The fence should run parallel with the batters back foot. If the batter casts the hands backwards or loops the bat, he will hit the fence or barrier.

ROLL YOUR BATS FOR POWER DRILL

Purpose: To increase bat control and to develop hand, wrist and forearm strength.

Equipment: A bat for each player.

Procedure:

1. The player assumes a stance with their hips facing an imaginary pitcher, swings the bat, starting the swing just prior to the wrist roll.
2. They roll the bat forward and backward, completing a full swing by touching both shoulders with the bat. They should execute the swing using only the forearms and wrists. They repeat the process as quickly as possible, until time has expired or a designated number of repetitions have been completed. The drill can also be done with the player beginning in their normal batting stance.

Coaching Points:

Remind the player to keep their wrist and hands relaxed through out the drill.

Emphasize performing the drill as quickly as possible without sacrificing proper techniques.

Players should feel a torso stretch (hips are open to the pitcher, but the arms are still back) prior to the swing. This will enable them to "feel" keeping the front side closed to pitcher as long as possible.

SEE YOUR SHADOW DRILL

Purpose: To determine the degree of head movement in the baseball swing.

We all know how hard it is to hit a baseball. Every hitting instructor worth his salt acknowledges the importance of a steady head during the swing. The reason is simple: The eyes are the source of information for the body. The information we see (the approaching pitch) must be as accurate as possible in order for us to put an accurate swing on the pitch. If we have excessive head movement then the information we receive will be distorted and therefore an accurate barrel to the incoming pitch will be nearly impossible to achieve.

A good analogy for head movement is this; Pretend that your head is a camera, your body is the tripod and your eyes are the lens! Ideally, we want to 'take pictures' of the pitch as it approaches the plate. If the camera (head) is moving all over the place, the lens (eyes) will take a blurry picture. Keep a steady head and rotate the body under the head during the swing.

Of course, a key point here is that if the player is constantly over-swinging (swinging with all of his/her might) at every pitch, more than likely he/she will have excessive head movement. It is extremely difficult to control head movement during a baseball swing if the player is exerting 100% effort on every swing. What I like to emphasize is for the player to put a smooth swing (perhaps 85% effort) on the ball, concentrating on rotating the body under a steady head. This smooth swing should result in a much more accurate barrel and decidedly less head movement.

So how do you achieve the necessary muscle memory for you to produce this type of swing on a regular basis? Your shadow knows!

1. Step out into your backyard and stand so that the sun is directly at your back.
2. Look on the ground and your shadow should be down there looking back at you. Place an XLR8 Practice Baseball (or a golf ball) on the ground.
3. Grab your bat and get in your stance.
4. Position yourself so that the ball is centered in the shadow of your head .

5. Now take a few swings and determine how far your head is moving by watching where the shadow ends up.
6. Ideally, if you were executing a step-by-step swing (see the six steps to a sweet swing drill), the ball should remain in the center of your head's shadow (or very close to it) through the first five steps.
7. As you finish the sixth step (the follow through) the shadow should move in front of the ball slightly.
8. Progress from slow, methodical, step by step swings to a swing resembling a slow motion film.
9. Continue to increase the speed of the swing until you reach about an 85% effort. These should be powerful, controlled, accurate barrel swings that emphasize the body rotating under the head.

If you are having difficulty in monitoring the position of your shadow during the swing, then enlist the assistance of someone to help keep track of the head movement.

10. For added difficulty have your assistant soft toss XLR8 Practice Balls to you!
11. Now, it becomes extremely important to have an accurate barrel because the target is smaller than an actual baseball.
12. Keeping the head steady will increase the accuracy of the barrel to the ball.
13. Incidentally, you will find that you will have to exert some effort to get the barrel to the ball before it leaves the 'hitting zone'.
14. Concentrate on that 'sweet swing'. The 'sweet swing' that has some power but is also controlled and accurate. This is the swing you want to groove. The swing you want to take to the batter's box with you in every game. You won't get it by wishing for it. You have to work at it.

Consistent use of this drill will transform you into a better hitter. Remember, if you aren't doing your work, your shadow knows!

STEP, STEP, HIT! DRILL

One of the most common faults with young hitters is stepping out. This drill is used to COMBAT THAT BAD HABIT.

1. The hitter sets up to start the drill one step behind where he should be when he hits the ball.
2. The hitter will step toward the plate with the back foot first then the front foot.
3. When the front foot hits the ground the batter will attack the ball. There should be no hesitation.
4. Step, step, HIT! The hitter will develop the habit of stepping into the ball when he attacks it.

His momentum is going toward the plate during this drill so it is very difficult for the hitter to step out.

KNEE-HANDS BATTING DRILL

Purpose: To improve proper hitting mechanics To increase hand, wrist and forearm strength.

Equipment: A swift stick, whiffle balls and a batting tee

Procedure:

1. The batting T is placed approximately 10 feet from the net. The player assumes a stance with he back knee on the ground and their front foot flat on the ground, creating approximately a 90-degree angle with their foot leg.
2. A whiffle ball is place on the tee and the hitter grips the swift stick in their back hand and swings through the ball.
3. This drill is repeated for a designated period of time and then the hitter switches the swift stick to their front hand and repeats the drill again.
4. This drill can also be done with tennis balls.
5. Once the player has the mechanics master, they can use a bat and baseballs/softballs. This drill can also be done off a soft toss. This drill should be performed for a prescribed period of time or a designated number of repetitions.

Coaching Points:

Emphasize performing the drill quickly without sacrificing proper techniques.

Emphasize the body remaining "tall", unlocking the shoulder, elbow and wrist in that order upon hitting the ball.

BASEBALL/SOFTBALL HAND-EYE VISION DRILLS

Hitting Drills

Colored Horseshoe of Baseball

1. This drill is used to warm up the eyes for live pitching.
2. Color the ball between the inside seams and have the pitcher throw a variety of pitches from the mound or 60 feet 6 inches.
3. In this drill, the batter picks up the spin as quickly as possible, calls out the pitch, and watches the ball into the catcher's mitt.
4. If the batter has trouble identifying the pitch before he throws it, this helps the batter pick up the type of pitch if they don't recognize it at the release point. (Don't hit the ball, just call it in flight.)

Colored Baseballs

1. Use 2-3 colored baseballs:
-----Red = Take
-----White = Hit Away
-----Green = Drag
2. The batter must react to the color of the ball as soon as he/she recognizes the color.
3. The drill can be used with live pitching or soft toss.

Soft Toss/Self Toss

1. Use Practice balls and toss the balls to yourself, hitting to all fields.
2. The following drills or wrinkles to these drills can be added to make the task of hitting much more difficult and force better concentration by the

batter.

3. Use a Training Bat, or bat smaller than your regular bat.
4. The tosser calls the field (right, left, center) he/she wants the ball hit as soon as the ball is about to be tossed. If the batter hits the ball to the wrong field or pops the ball up, the players switch positions. The batter can take pitches or the tosser can call for the batter to take a pitch. If the batter swings on a take call, he's out and the players switch.
5. The batter closes his/her eyes and opens them when the tosser calls "open." The batter can take pitches or the tosser can hold the ball. If the player swings and no ball is thrown or pops the ball up the players switch.

THE QUICK RELEASE DRILL

This drill teaches the player to pick up the pitch at the release point and to keep his/her head down on the swing.

1. The batter calls out the number of fingers, 1-5, that the pitcher throws at the batter, swings and again calls out the number of fingers that a coach has flashed after the bat passes the plate.
2. The coach flashing the numbers stands 5-6 feet in front of the outside corner of the plate.
3. The drill can be made more difficult by having the pitcher use a ball and show pitches to the hitter without releasing the ball.
4. The hitter would make the visual shift to the plate and hit a ball off a tee after calling out the pitch.

To make the drill even harder, replace the single tee with a double tee, placing the inside tee (higher) about 3-4 feet in front of the inside corner and the second tee (lower) equal to the front point of the outside corner.

5. The batter is now forced to see the ball at the release point and react to the

pitch (FB, Curve, etc.) If the pitcher show fastball, the batter must turn and pull the ball off the inside tee. If the batter reads off speed pitch, the batter must drive the ball to right field off the outside tee. (Reverse the tees for a left-handed batter.)

BASIC HAND-EYE VISION DRILLS

1. Hold a pencil at arm's length. Focus on the pencil's number and move the pencil toward you.
2. When the number begins to blur, extend your arm and begin again.
3. Then, hold one pencil in each hand one as close to your face as possible without the number blurring, and the other at arm's length.
4. Focus first on the near pencil (you may notice the distant pencil blurring into two images).
5. Then stare at the far pencil. Alternate your focus, gradually increasing your speed.
6. Do each exercise for five minutes, rest five minutes and repeat.
7. Put press-on letters on a Wiffle ball, then hang the ball by a string in a doorway.
8. Twist the string and, while the ball turns, identify as many letters as possible.
9. Perform for three minutes, rest three minutes and repeat.

BUNT PEPPER DRILL

This is a great drill to develop bunting skills.

1. The drill involves 5 players in each group.
2. The players may use the pivot or square around bunt technique.
3. The batter must bunt the ball to each of the four fielders.

4. The hitter bunts one to each and then takes the left fielders (facing the batter) place.
5. The right fielder comes to bat and the other move over one place.
6. The coach should emphasize that the batters bunt the ball softly to the fielders.
7. The bat should be keep at a 45 degree angle and the batter should change height by bending the knees.
8. Fielders should catch the ground ball, bare-handed, out front, then square the feet around and throw the next strike to the hitter. This makes a great warmup drill for the beginning of practice.

Defensive skills should also be stressed.

DOUBLE TEE (INSIDE/OUTSIDE) PITCH LOCATION DRILL

Purpose: To develop the proper mechanics necessary to hit a pitch in any location and to all fields.

Equipment: A bat, softballs, two batting tees (or a double tee) and a net.

Procedure:

1. The batting tees are positioned with one high and inside and the other low and outside.
2. The hitter assumes their normal batting stance at an appropriate distance from the first tee. On command, they execute the proper swing necessary to pull through the high-inside pitch and quickly returns to the ready position. As soon as he or she is ready, they hit the low-outside ball to the opposite field, adjusting their swing accordingly. The tee position can be altered at the coach's discretion (high-outside, inside-belt high, outside-belt high, etc.). This drill should be performed for a prescribed period of time or a designated number of repetitions.

Coaching Points:

Emphasize concentrating on pitch location.

Emphasize using the proper techniques.

The drill should be preformed daily in the early part of the season.

All elements of the swing should be critiqued.

WEIGHT BACK DRILL

1. The batter stands about 20 feet away from the pitcher.
2. The pitcher takes a tennis ball and bounces the ball so that the ball ends up in the strike zone.
3. With bouncing the balls the hitter will tend to jump out on his or her front foot.

This drill will allow he or she to stay back in the load and keep his or her weight back so that they can explode on the ball. This drill really works because not only will it keep their weight back, it allows them to see it come out of the pitchers hand just like they were pitching an off speed pitch.

THE "COUNT IS FULL" GAME DRILL

This is a great game simulation drill that teaches hitters to be aggressive and to hit under pressure.

1. Two teams face off in a 7 inning game with each batter coming into the box with a full count.
2. Action is quick and players must be alert both offensively and defensively.
3. The count may also be changed to 2-2 and each team can be given one out to start the inning.

UPPER BODY POWER HITTING DRILL

Purpose: To isolate and work on the hip rotation and upper body mechanics.

Equipment: A bat, balls, tee and a net

Procedure:

1. The player steps to the stop where the front foot would be after the stride and starts in that position.
2. They swing and concentrate on the pivot, hip rotation and movement of the upper body. They drive the front shoulder to the outside corner of the plate. They keep the head down and looks inside the tee after contact. The goal is to hit a hard line drive off the tee. This drill should be performed for a prescribed period of time or a designated number of repetitions.

Variation: Put a target on a fence (a square of tape or a paper plate) for players to attempt to hit. They should avoid lifting their heads to watch the flight of the ball. They start 10 feet from the fence. As the players move further back, it becomes more difficult for them to hit the target because the degree of error has increased.

Coaching Points:

Emphasizing keeping their head down and not watching the flight path of the ball.

Emphasize using the upper body and hips, not the lower body.

Emphasize using proper techniques.

THE HIT THE WALL BALL DRILL

This is a great off season skill building activity. It develops both offensive and defensive skills.

1. The game is played with 3 players on a team.
2. On defense, one pitches and two play defense.
3. The object of the game is to be the first team to score 21.
4. You score by hitting a line drive or ball in the air that hits the wall in a designated or target area.
5. The target area is normally a 6x12 rectangle that is attached to the wall or fence. The target may be larger if space so allows.

The rules for the game are as follows:

- A. Each team gets three outs per inning.

- B.** Outs are hit balls caught before they hit the wall or floor.
- C.** Foul tips, foul balls, and swing without contact are outs.
- D.** Each player gets one swing of the bat. Something must happen, if the ball is a strike.
- E.** The batter decides if a ball is a strike.
- F.** Ground balls are not outs. They serve to keep the inning alive. You do not get a run for ground balls.
- G.** Flyballs that go above the target are outs.
- H.** Balls may be batted down by defenders to prevent a score. However, batted balls that touch the target before they touch the floor are scored as a run.

The winning team must win by two. A tournament bracket is drawn and teams play for the championship. Coaches and parents are encouraged to play on teams. Each team may use only one bat. The bat never touches the ground or floor until the inning is over.

THE BATTING BALANCE BEAM DRILL

Here's a drill you may find useful.

1. Construct a batting beam with pieces of 2" x 4"s.
2. The main piece should be about 4' long.
3. Two cross pieces about 18" should be nailed about 16" from each end of main piece.
4. Have player stand on this during soft toss.
5. The player should remain on beam throughout swing.

The beam encourages the batter to be on the balls of their feet and to maintain a balanced swing. It also helps the batter to take their timing step straight to the pitcher. The players don't like this beam at first, but it does help.

THE "SUPER" BARRIER DRILL

1. Have the batter stand one bat length from a barrier (I prefer a net to prevent damage to the bat, but you can use a fence).
2. Have THEM take her normal swing.
3. If HE OR SHE hits the barrier, they are unlocking their elbows before their shoulders and getting wide on the swing.

THE "SUPER" REAR BARRIER DRILL:

1. Place a barrier directly behind the batter and have them take their normal swing.
2. If the bat hits the barrier, they are dropping her hands.
3. You can use this barrier even when you are using a pitching machine or live pitching for instant feedback to the batter that he or she is dropping their hands.

THE "KNOB TAP" DRILL

1. Get the help of someone to help you.
2. You will need a whiffle ball or other soft ball.
3. Have your training partner toss the ball up softly in front of you.
4. From a good, fundamentally sound batting stance, try to hit the ball with the knob of your bat. Take the knob of the bat directly at the ball and just tap it.
5. Be sure to incorporate your lower body action into the drill.
6. Repeat until you are proficient and are using smooth, rhythmic motions to the ball.

If you have a small enough bat available, you can progress in this drill to one handed soft toss. Alternating your top hand drill and bottom hand drill, discussed above, while incorporating the action of striking a softly tossed ball into the drill. This is an excellent training method and will develop tremendously active hands through the hitting zone as well as improve your hand-eye coordination. The result will be pure striking of the ball at the optimum point of impact. Something every hitter strives for.

TOP OF YOUR HAND DRILL

1. The top hand on the grip is the hand that takes the bat to the ball.
2. It is important to develop strength and skill with this hand.
3. To do this we do a one-handed isolation drill.
4. The batter uses just the top hand.
5. Gripping the bat at the top of the grip and using the bat like a tomahawk, the batter tries to get over the top of the ball and hit it into the ground.
6. The batter has a coach or player soft toss the ball above the waist.
7. The batter hits the ball from the top and drives it straight into the ground. Suggested - 25 Swings - 3 Times a week.

THE ROLL YOUR WRIST DRILL

Purpose: To strengthen the player's hands, wrist and forearms.

Equipment: A horizontal bar with a weight suspended from a rope attached to the middle of the horizontal bar (a wooden dowel, rope and weights, varying from 2.5 lbs., 5, 10, 15, etc.)

Procedure:

1. The player grips the bar with both hands, holding it a waist level, be sure that the weight does not touch the ground (be sure that the elbows are next to the body).
2. The player curls their wrist up and down to raise the and lower the weight. The drill is down for a prescribed period of time or for a designated number of repetitions. To make the drill more challenging, have the players as their arms to shoulder level and extend them out in front.

Coaching Points:

Coach should vary the amount of weight and repetitions according to the strength of each player.

Be sure that the players keep their arms at a 90 degree angle.

Emphasize just wrist action and not foreman movement of up and down.

"NEXT TO THE FENCE" DRILL

1. The next best drill is to reinforce the proper hand action is swinging the bat with both hands.
2. Here is a drill that will help you to get the right feel for the proper path of the bat to the hitting zone. Remember, all of the essential fundamentals discussed earlier must be adhered to; grip, stance, pre-swing, rhythm, etc., during these drills.
3. Stand facing a fence, holding your back arm straight out so that the tip of your fingers just touch the fence. Now, with bat in hand and utilizing the proper fundamentals, swing the bat through the hitting zone, concentrating on taking your hands "to the ball".
4. The tip of the bat should not hit the fence. If it does, you will get immediate negative feedback. Hitting the fence is a result of "casting" or "sweeping" your hands through the hitting zone.

5. Take the hands directly at the ball (an inside path), then be sure to "squash the bug," hit against a stiff front side, and bring the wrist action into the swing. Finish high and over the front shoulder, your belly button facing the imaginary pitcher.

Remember, every time you swing the bat, swing it correctly. Muscle memory is powerful; use it to your advantage. Make your muscles remember a perfect swing when you practice and come game time, when your muscles are "reacting," your swing will be functional, beautiful to watch, and fundamentally sound. Perfect practice, makes perfect.

THE POWER HAND DRILL

1. A hitter's power comes from the bottom or pull hand.
2. This drill develops bottom hand strength.
3. The hitter uses only the bottom hand in its regular position near the knob of the bat.
4. The coach must make sure that the ball is above the batters waist. It is best for the ball to be numbers high.
5. The batter steps into the ball and hits its one-handed. Suggested - 25 Swings - 3 Times a week.

SITTING ON THE CHAIR DRILL

There's one more drill to emphasize the importance of the hands to the ball. This drill can be incorporated with a soft toss, if you choose, but is very effective even without the luxury of hitting a ball during the drill.

1. Find yourself an old plastic chair, or a bucket with a lid, and sit on it.
2. Lock your ankles around the legs of the chair or base of the bucket. This is to anchor yourself into the chair. We want to eliminate the lower body action in this drill. The only thing moving will be from the waist up.
3. Take your bat and get in the hitting position. If you have the luxury of a practice partner, have him toss a ball up into the hitting zone.
4. Take your hands directly at the ball, concentrating on the proper wrist action into and through the hitting zone. Finish high and over the shoulder.

THE QUICK EYE LOCATION CONTACT DRILL

1. The hitter is given three pitch locations to practice hitting; inside, away and middle.
2. The ball may be presented to the batter using soft toss or batting tee.
3. On the inside location, the batter must learn to involve the hips and turn on the pitch, pulling it.
4. On the middle pitch the batter hits the ball dead up the middle.
5. On the away pitch, the batter makes sure to take the ball to the opposite field.
6. The coach may want to put spots on the ground showing where the batter attacks each pitch location.
7. The inside pitch is attacked on a spot located in front of the plate.

8. The middle pitch is attacked on a spot located just behind the instep of the hitter's front foot.

9. The away strike is attacked on a spot located just inside of the hitters back foot. Suggested - 20 At Each Location - 3 Times Weekly.

THE TWIRL YOUR BAT DRILL:

Purpose: To increase bat control and to develop hand, wrist and foreman strength.

Equipment: A bat for each player.

Procedure:

1. The player extends their arms in front of their body with a slight bent at the elbow.
2. He or she holds the bat in a vertical position and begins to rotate the bat in a tight circle clockwise, gradually increasing the speed of the bat head.
3. After a designated period of time, the player twirls the bat in a counterclockwise direction.
4. After a designated period of time, the player switches hands and repeats the drill.

Coaching Points:

Emphasize bat speed and keeping the twirls tight.

Increase the number of repetitions gradually.

THE SOFT-TOSS DRILL

The soft-toss may be used to work on pulling the ball; it can also be used for hitting the opposite way.

1. The "tosser" must be a safe distance to the rear of the hitter. The hitter must not peak.
2. The "tosser" tosses the ball from the inside of the plate diagonally across to the outside.
3. The hitter picks up the ball with his peripheral vision and "tracks" the ball with both his body and his eyes to the hitting zone.
4. As soon as the hitter sees the ball come into his view, he follows it with his body by taking a stride toward the opposite field side of second base. He pushes off with his rear foot but does not squash the bug (Photo to the Left).
5. When the ball reaches the hitting zone, he swings with a quick bat and "strokes" the ball the other way.

Throw your hands at the ball. On the follow through the hitter should drop to his back knee to emphasize the importance of not squashing or rotating the back hip.

"TWO BALLS AT THE SAME TIME" SOFT TOSS

1. The hitter learns to concentrate and keep the weight back.
2. The coach tosses two balls.
3. The coach calls top or bottom after the balls are released.
4. The hitter hits the called ball into the fence or screen.
5. This drill can be done from different locations.
6. The coach should also fake toss and change the release points as well as vary the speed of the balls.

Tip:

Players should Know All Hitting Terms

Squash The Bug- The correct action of the hitters back foot.

Trigger-The hitters final inside turn movement before the swing.
See The Ball Flat-See the ball until it goes flat against the bat and comes off.

ROCK YOUR BAT DRILL

Purpose: To increase bat control and to develop hand, wrist and forearm strength.

Equipment: A bat for each player.

Procedure:

1. The player extends their arms in front of their body with a slight bent at the elbow.
2. They hold the bat in a vertical position and begin to rock the bat from left to right, stopping the downward arc of the bat at waist level. The player will gradually increase the speed of the bat. This is done for a designated period of time. After a designated period of time, the player switches hands and repeats the drill.

Coaching Points:

Emphasize the speed of the bat and where the downward arc is stopped
Increase the number of repetitions gradually.

SOFT TOSS DRILLS

Baseball and softball soft toss drills. These soft toss drills will help with your timing and with your trigger mechanism. When used properly in conjunction with the other drills, you should be able to develop a fluid, easy swing. Let's get started!

1. Baseball and softball soft toss drills-as you take your stance, have someone toss you balls from behind a screen just a short distance in front of you and little off to the side.
2. The objectives in this drill are to develop good timing and good balance.

3. As the person tossing the ball brings his arm back (underhand), you should also be starting a backward motion.
4. What I mean by this is start a small coil back like you are cocking a trigger. Your weight should be on your back foot.
5. As his arm is starting forward, you should be striding ready to hit the ball.
6. Another variation of this drill would be for you to take you stride early, wait till he tosses the ball, than take your swing. This simulates the off speed pitch and makes you maintain your balance.
7. The essentials of this drill are to maintain your balance throughout your swing.
8. You should never be falling over at any point, or falling off to the side after swinging. Maintain balance!
9. The other essential is fluidity. This drill is to over emphasize being fluid.
10. As his arm goes back, you should be starting your fluid backward motion, with your weight being transferred to your rear foot.
11. As his arm comes forward, you are maintaining your motion by shifting the motion forward with your stride. Not your weight. Remember, don't lunge, stride.
12. You should be able to stride and put your foot down and still feel like most of your weight is on the rear leg. Practice!

If you follow these baseball soft toss drills and incorporate them with your other drills, you should see a vast improvement in your overall game. Remember, you can always come back to this page to review by clicking on the "baseball soft toss drills" link. Also, visit the other drill sites by clicking on the links below or go to the sitemap to locate which drill you prefer.

“FAR AWAY” TOSS BATTING PRACTICE

One of the best misconceptions in baseball is that to benefit from batting practice the pitcher must be at regular distance and throw game speed.

1. Much more can be accomplished when the pitcher throws from half the regular distance.
2. At this distance the pitcher has better control and more work is accomplished.
3. The ball is thrown at a steady appropriate speed.
4. The speed at this distance should make the batter develop a quicker bat and great skill.
5. The coach should never do this drill without an L-screen. This drill can also be performed with regular or golf-ball sized wiffle balls.

STRONG WRISTS FOR BATTING DRILL

Purpose: To increase bat control and to develop hand, wrist and forearm strength.

Equipment: A bat for each player.

Procedure:

1. The player extends their arms in front of her body with a slight bent at the elbow.
2. They hold the bat in a vertical position and create an imaginary figure eight in the air, gradually increasing the speed of the bat. After a designated period of time or number of repetitions, the player reverses the direction of the bat. After a designated period of time, the player switches hands and repeats the drill.

Coaching Points:

THE INSIDE –OUTSIDE BALL WITH TEE DRILL

The use of an "inside-outside" tee is invaluable in learning to hit the ball the opposite way and/or pulling the ball.

1. To properly set up this drill, place the ball on the "inside," approximately 8-10" in front of the plate and the ball on the "outside," right on the outside edge of the front corner.
2. The "inside" ball should be about 4-5" higher than the outside ball.
3. The hitter gets in a fundamentally sound batting stance and begins his "pre-swing," cocking his hands and body in preparation to hit the ball wherever it is "pitched."
4. His training partner then announces "inside" or "outside."
5. The batter attacks the appropriate ball using all of the aforementioned techniques.

For the "inside" ball, the keys would be to hit off a stiff front side and get good rotation of the rear foot with a balanced follow through. For the "outside" pitch, the hitter must concentrate on stepping to the opposite field side of second base, lifting the heel (but not rotating the back side). Taking a smooth, quick swing at the ball with the hands on the inside of the ball, and dropping to the rear knee to emphasize the non-rotation of the hip.

THE BRING-BY DRILL

1. The purpose of this drill is the increase of bat speed.
2. This drill is best performed with soft toss.
3. The batter hits a ball that is coming from his back side going toward the pitcher.
4. The hitter must see the ball and catch-up with it before it gets by him.
5. The speed of the ball is increased to challenge the hitter more and more.

6. When performing this drill with a Bat Action Hitting Machine, it is recommended that you remove the machines power bands to increase your swing counts and to vary the balls come-by speeds.

BOTH HAND WRIST SNAPS

Purpose: To increase bat control and to develop hand, wrist and forearm strength.

Equipment: A bat for each player.

Procedure:

1. The drill begins with the player holding the bat in her back hand.
2. They swing the bat, starting the swing just prior to the wrist roll.
3. They snap the wrist through and quickly return the bat to the starting position.
4. They repeat the process as quickly as possible until time has expired or a designated number of repetitions have been completed. The player then switches the bat to the lead hand and repeats the drill.

Coaching Points:

Emphasizing gripping the bat properly.

Emphasizing properly snapping the wrist.

Stress quickness of drill but without sacrificing proper techniques.

Increase the number of repetitions gradually.

THE "ON YOUR KNEES" DRILL

This simple little drill is an outstanding tool to help the player to make more consistent contact with the baseball. Designed to ingrain the proper path for the lead hand to attack the ball, it also develops proper top hand action. When correctly employed, the drill helps the hitter to understand the role of each hand during the swing. A hands only drill, the drill promotes active hands and wrists in the hitters swing. As you will see, the player also gets instruction on when to hit the pitch in relation to the pitch location; inside, outside or middle. To add even further instruction into one drill, the player gets feedback on where the bat strikes the ball; top, middle or bottom. All in all, this is an
OUTSTANDING HITTING DRILL and one that is not well known.

1. The "pitcher" will need a fence or "L" screen to protect himself for this drill.
2. The player gets on both knees. By being on both knees the lower half of the body is virtually eliminated in the swing. This is important because the hands do need to be separated in drills in order to ingrain the proper muscle memory for their actions.
3. The pitcher situates himself behind the "L" screen approximately 10 feet from the hitter.
4. The pitcher then rolls the ball toward the center of the strike zone. The hitter "takes the knob of the bat directly toward the ball" (bottom hand leads).
5. As the ball reaches the "hitting zone" the hitter then "directs" the head of the bat with the top hand (top hand directs) and strikes the ball. Immediate feedback is generated from each swing.
6. If the bat strikes the ground first this is an indication that the bat-head is leveling out too soon. This is a major cause of pop-ups in real play. The player must make the adjustment with his top hand. If the ball is struck but rolls along the ground, or bounces away, the player has hit too much of the top of the ball.
7. Again, the player must make the top hand adjustment. Ideally, the player will hit the center of the ball and the result will be a line drive slightly off the ground and headed sharply toward the pitcher. As you can see the drill is essentially three components; 1) the bottom hand must lead the bat to the ball 2) the top hand must direct the head of the

bat to the ball 3) the player must strike the proper portion of the ball to be successful. Three tremendously important facets of hitting are rolled into one simple drill!

8. The player can take the drill even further by having the pitcher roll the ball to the outside portion of the plate or to the inside portion. These are outstanding variations of the "NOW" drill seen elsewhere on this site.
9. The player must "wait", "wait", "wait" for the outside ball to roll into the "hitting" zone and then accelerate the hands to strike the ball. Wait, Wait, Wait... Accelerate! This is the proper approach for hitting to the opposite field AND for hitting off-speed pitches and curveballs.
10. On the contrary, the pitch rolled to the inside of the plate requires the player to get started early enough to get the bat-head into the hitting zone. This drill has many uses and can assist a hitter with several aspects of the swing. It can help you to Be A Better Hitter.

THE SUPER-QUICK EYE HITTING DRILL

This is one of my favorite drills.

1. The hitter assumes a comfortable and correct stance each time. Then the hitter closes the eyes.
2. The coach or holder will change the strike height and location each time.
3. A verbal command is given, the hitter opens the eyes and hits the ball correctly wherever it is located.
4. The batter must use the correct swing to hit inside, middle, and away pitches.
5. The holder will also locate the ball out of the strike zone.
6. Any ball above the hands or on the ground is a ball and should not be hit.

Suggested - 15 Swings - 3 Times a week.

TWO HAND WRIST SNAPS

Purpose: To increase bat control and to develop hand, wrist and forearm strength.

Equipment: A bat for each player.

Procedure:

1. The drill begins with the player holding the bat with both hands, using their normal batting grip.
2. They take a swing, starting the swing just prior to the wrist snap. They snap the wrist through and quickly return the bat to the starting position. They repeat the process as quickly as possible, until time has expired or a designated number of repetitions have been completed.

Coaching Points:

Emphasizing properly snapping the wrist.

Stress quickness of drill but without sacrificing proper techniques.

Increase the number of repetitions gradually.

“KNOCK OUT THE BALL” DRILL

The purpose of this drill for a baseball or softball player is much the same as a boxer using a heavy bag to train with. Boxers learn how to develop power in their punch by trying to power through the 120-200lb heavy bag. Baseball players learn to develop power in their swing by hitting through a heavier object than a normal 5oz baseball. The result is the same for both athletes... increased power through the point of contact! For a boxer, that means more of a chance to knock his opponent out. For a baseball player it means more of a chance to knock the ball out of the park!!

Tools you will need:

- (1) A Batting Tee
- (2) A plunger
- (3) A flat soccer or basketball
- (4) A hitting net

- (5) A bat
- (6) A winning attitude

Here is how the program works:

1. Place the plunger handle into the batting tee.
2. Place the flat soccer (different sizes for different age groups) or flat basketball (high school and above) onto the plunger.
4. Execute your normal swing repeatedly

What you will see is that with the first few swings the barrel of the bat will stutter through the impact zone. By "stutter" I mean that it will decelerate at the point of impact for a fraction of a second before resuming its speed to the finishing position. The goal is for the hitter to strike the much heavier ball without having the bat decelerate at the impact point. This takes proper technique and explosion at the point of impact to achieve.

Encourage the player to concentrate on the proper mechanics and not concern himself with launching the ball. Proper mechanics will accelerate the bat head sufficiently to power through the heavier ball. The flight path of the ball should be level (or very slightly higher than chest high) into the hitting net. A properly struck ball will have "12 to 6" rotation. When this same type of contact is conducted on a 9" and 5oz. baseball, the "12 to 6" rotation will result in rocket line drives that soar over the outfielder's heads in a heart beat!

Power is all about bat speed at impact, not the size of the player. This drill will increase the power at impact if it is used on a regular basis. When the player looks like he is powering through the ball with too much ease, increase the size and weight of the ball he is striking. Remember to always use a flat ball for this drill.

This Drill can transform the lightest of lightweights on your team into big time Heavy Hitters on the ball field. I hope it helps you to Be A Better Hitter.