

RFYBO Hitting Guidelines

Hitting: Keep it simple Load and Explode!

Loading is necessary, the uncoiling creates bat speed like a golf swing
Explode at the ball with the correct fundamentals in your swing

Misconception #1: Back elbow up (why up when it has to go down right away)

Misconception #2: Level swing (creates a dropping of the bat head)

What are the correct fundamentals?

- The Stance
 1. Back foot: straight ahead or angle in slightly, weight on inside of foot
 2. Front foot: slightly closed in, weight on inside of foot
 - * creates a knock-knee feeling to help stay closed
 3. Knees slightly bent, weight about 60/40 on back side
 4. Hands at back shoulder, forms “the triangle” with hands and elbows
 5. Head still, focused on pitcher
 6. Loose grip, bat in fingertips
 7. Have a rhythm or some “noise” (ex. small circles)
 - Load
 1. shift weight to back side
 2. hands go back with weight shift
 3. front foot (small stride or just pick up and set back down)
 - stays closed initially until actual swing
 4. weight stays on back side, even after the stride
 5. head stays steady, chin to front shoulder
 - The Swing
 1. Trigger is the back knee, rotation starts from the bottom up:
back knee, back foot, hips, back elbow to belly, keep bat close to shoulder
 2. Chin goes shoulder to shoulder, everything rotates except the head
- “Land the Plane”
1. Steep approach / touch down (contact first)
 2. Taxi down the runway (extension through contact zone, hands level throughout)
 3. Pull off, go dock the plane (roll wrists over and follow through)
- Note: do not tell them to roll wrists over, it will happen naturally

Common Flaws

- Front stride foot must be down *before* trigger can start the swing
- Lunging speeds up the baseball (widen out stance and lots of tee/soft toss work)
- Extending the arms too soon, need to stay inside the baseball (fence drill)
- “The Hitch” – hands and bat drop down and back up before swing (overemphasize correct loading, break down swing robotically, swing from knee)
- Swinging *at* the ball, not *through* the ball (volleyball, 2 ball tee work)
- Bat held back in palm locks all 3 hitting “hinges” (fingers, wrist, elbow)

9 Contact Points in the Hitting Zone

- Note: Low = knee, Middle = thigh, Up = waist
 1. Low and in
 2. Middle in
 3. Up and in
 4. Low middle
 5. Middle middle
 6. Up and middle
 7. Low and away
 8. Middle away
 9. Up and away

Hitting Drills

* Note: 5 swings at a time is more realistic to an at-bat and keeps everyone moving more

- Tee Work
 - 5 warm-up swings, then 5 swings at each of the 9 locations = 50 swings
 - focus on imaginary pitcher, see the pitch, hit the ball
 - back the tee up to get a better look at where the ball is going
 - scrimmage with hitter hitting off a tee
 - * Note: stance placement to tee/plate according to the 9 contact zones
 - inside pitch = close to plate and front foot even with back tip of plate
 - middle pitch = normal distance from plate, front foot even with middle
 - outside pitch = further from plate and front foot even with front of plate
- Soft Toss
 - same as tee work, 5 swings each contact location and switch with partner
 - tosser to front side about 45 degree angle from hitter
 - show the ball so hitter can load correctly and give a good firm toss
 - * the toss is as important as the swing for this drill to be effective
 - back up to get a better look at where the ball is going
 - scrimmage with hitter hitting soft toss instead of an actual pitch
 - * Note: toss placement to hitter according to the 9 contact zones
 - inside pitch = toss at front knee, thigh, or hip
 - middle pitch = toss between legs at knee, thigh, or waist height
 - outside pitch = toss at back knee, thigh, or hip
- Short Toss
 - throw from one knee from a short distance, can use whiffle balls also
 - make hitter be short and quick
 - can be more accurate from short distances also (hit corners better)
 - make it a game of some kind who can hit the pitcher the most times, etc.
 - throw in a birdie once in a while, see if they keep their weight back
- Fence Drill – help keep the hands in
- Rhythm Drill – move one step closer to pitcher each line drive, one step back if not
- Drop Toss – similar to Mauer Quickswing
- Back Toss – must be quick
- Side Toss Spinners – work on hitting curve balls
- Shorten Up / 2 Strike Hitting – choke up and put the ball in play
- 2 Ball Soft Toss – tell hitter top or bottom as you toss
- Live BP – set limits
 - 1 Minute Drill (must get 2 bunts down first and then can swing rest of time)
 - 3 Out BP Drill (must get bunt down first and then swing until you get 3 outs)
 - No Strike Drill (hit till you miss take a strike, swing and miss, foul ball)