

Hitting Plan

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(29 years coaching, 418 wins)

The following article is a comprehensive 5-part plan to hitting that prepares the hitter for success. The five main ingredients include a proper stance, weight transfer back, stride separation, swing sequence, and finish. When these areas are consistently done by the hitter tremendous results can be expected. Included with this hitting plan are drills that augment the fundamental.

- I. Stance: Very athletic, balanced, workable, compact, without extremes.**
 - A. Two level eyes while in the stance.
 - B. Heels behind toes.
 - C. Feet shoulder width apart lined up with the pitcher and the opposite batters box.
Two straight lines.
 - D. Knees inside of feet.
 - E. Weight on the front side of feet.
 - F. Upper body vertically stacked.
 - G. Arms at a 45-degree angle.
 - H. Arms off the back shoulder and over the back foot.
 - I. Elbows levels...avoid front elbow being higher than the back.
 - J. Knob pointed down and slightly back so it points toward the catcher.
 - K. Small knuckles on the top hand aligned between the big and small knuckles on the bottom hand.
- II. Weight Transfer**
 - A. When the pitcher picks up front knee.
 - B. Keep back leg stable and push off the inside big toe (ball of foot) of the front foot. This causes the weight to transfer back, but the hitter still maintains a 50/50 weight distribution.
 - C. Keep the head level and the hands quiet at this time. Do not push the weight over the back foot...(back knee is over the back foot). The weight should be pushed against the back foot.
 - D. Note: when pushing off the front toe/ball of foot, the front knee will point at roughly a 45-degree angle...thus pushing the weight back.
 - E. The hitter must go back before he goes forward and into the swing.
- III. Stride Separation**
 - A. Takes place when the pitcher front foot lands and his arm is either coming up or coming forward to the release point.
 - B. Has to take place before the ball is half way to home plate.
 - C. Simultaneously, the front foot strides forward about 4 inches as the hands go “back and up” with the shoulders square.
 - D. The barrel which is at a 45-degree angle should be above and behind the hitters head by the time the hitters front foot lands and his hands get back an up in the so called “lock and load” position.
 - E. At the end of the stride the front foot should be at a 45-degree angle, on the ball of the foot, and no longer completely closed.
- IV. Sequence/Start of the Swing**
 - A. The swing begins from the ground up.
 - B. Order of the swing: Back foot, back knee, back hip, and hands.
 - C. The back heel comes off the ground at which point the back knee turns in toward the firm front leg. *This will put the back heel above the back toes and keep the*

hitter's head over his belly button, thus keeping his weight at 50/50. Keep the back knee flexible, but tall.

- D. Once the back foot and back knee have been engaged, the hitter will then engage the hips. They will rotate with the help of the back foot rotation that has properly taken place during the pivot. This in turn brings the hands forward and down to the point of contact.
 - 1. At contact, the arms are bent, the top hand is palm up and the bottom hand is palm down.
- E. As the hands go forward and down, it is very important to lead with the knob down, as the barrel trails the hands. The barrel should be angled up and therefore be above the hands until the barrel arrives at the point of contact. The barrel is then dropped on the ball at which time the barrel will actually be below the ball.
- F. The key thing for the hitter will then be to say through the ball as long as possible during the follow through.
- G. The laces on the back foot should face the pitcher when hitting the ball up the middle of the field or to the hitting pull field. When hitting to the opposite field, the hitter should face his laces toward the opposite field.

V. Misc.

- A. The hitter should take his nose and the barrel of the bat to the point of contact. This is the hand to eye coordination that is needed to direct the barrel to the ball, which is needed to make the best contact.
- B. The hitter should focus on the letters of the pitcher's cap and adjust his eyes from that point to when the pitcher's arm gets all the way up as he nears the release point of the delivery. This will take place after the pitcher's front foot lands and his arm is coming up. This will vary from pitcher to pitcher, so the batter must study each pitcher individually.
- C. The key to studying a pitcher's motion is to utilize the "3 R's":
 - 1. Rhythm of the pitcher
 - 2. Release point...over the top, 3/4, side arm, etc.
 - 3. Rotation...(Early pitch recognition: Fastball, Curveball, Change-up, etc.)
- D. Stay inside the ball with the hands.
- E. The weight transfer back and stride separation, also known as the walk away from the hands, should be done "**SLOW, EARLY, and QUIET**" in order to keep two level eyes and balance in the stance and the entire process of the swing.

VI. Finish/Swing

- A. The nose and the barrel (anode, positive) sweet spot should go to the ball.
- B. The hitter should try and keep his head in a "no peak" position and remain at the point of contact. (This is not an absolute, but has proven to be an effective technique during the swing).
- C. The head should be level at contact, "eyebrows level".
- D. The barrel should extend through the ball, as if you were hitting 5-6 extra baseballs on the same plane as the original pitch.
- E. The top hand should be "up" and remain that way as the hands and arms stay through the ball.
- F. Hands should finish high by the opposite shoulder.

Hitting Drills

1. Torque Drill. Angle Toss.
2. Walking Rhythm Drill. Angle Toss.
3. 30-foot soft toss.
4. Long Tee/Cage Drill
5. Two Strike Hitting Drill
6. Off field hitting.
7. Tracking drill/Read the pitch and spin. Call strike/ball.
8. Call the release and strike drill. Learn the strike zone.
9. Variation one angle toss.
10. Variation two angle toss.
11. Hitting “T” w/milk crate high pitch.
12. Enforce: “No Peak”, elbows down, separate stride from swing, stride inside spike, back side tall, i.e.: pivoting on the back foot so the heel ends up over the toe, definite short arc, staying inside the ball with the barrel, stance away from the plate while maintaining plate coverage, standing in the back of the box, working on a good weight shift hands up on the inward turn, barrel travels high in the zone so it can be dropped on the ball at the last instance, etc...coming down on everything.
13. Bunting drills: Sac down first, third, squeeze, slug bunt, and drag bunt.
14. Review purpose for each bunt and swing, etc.

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