

Short Toss Drills

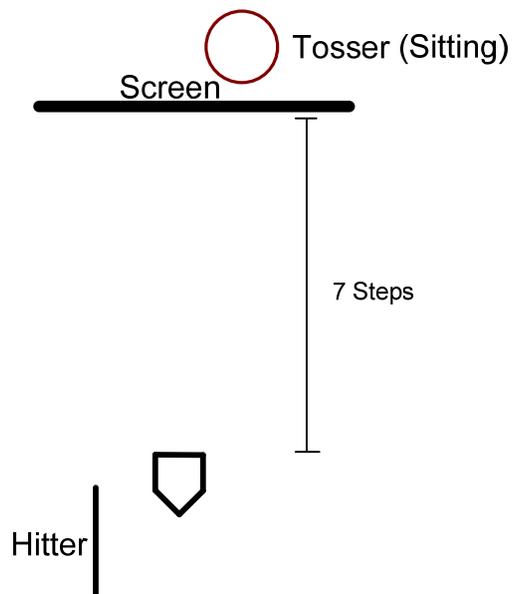
In, In, Out, Out

Rocket

Soft, Softer, Softest

Ball - Hit

All short toss should be setup in the following fashion.



In, In, Out, Out

Purpose

- Recognize the difference in hitting the inside pitch as opposed to the outside pitch.
- Establish that the inside pitch must be hit out in front and pulled.
- Establish that the outside pitch must be hit back in the zone and the player must hit the ball to the opposite field.

Drill

- The player will assume his normal stance in the box.
- The feeder will position himself so that he is sitting behind a screen that is seven steps away from the plate. This must be a screen that he can throw over while sitting.
- The first two pitches that the feeder throws should be on the inside of the plate. The player should hit these pitches out in front and pull them.
- The next two pitches that the feeder throws should be on the outside of the plate. The player should wait for the ball to get back by his back leg and hit the ball to the opposite field.
- In short toss the player will always take blocks of four pitches. At this time the block of four can be repeated. In, In, Out, Out.

Rocket

Purpose

- To prepare for hard throwing pitchers.
- To effectively hit while using the pre-stride technique.
- To quicken the players swing.

Drill

- The player and feeder will assume their normal positions as illustrated in the short toss model.
- The feeder will tell the player to stride. When the player's stride foot comes down the feeder will give a short pause (weight back) and throw the ball with added velocity.
- To give the feeder an idea of how hard to throw the ball for this drill all that needs to be said is the drill was named after Roger "Rocket" Clemens.
- At first, the hitter should have a tough time catching up to the velocity.
- As timing and quickness improve the hitter will be much more comfortable with this drill.

Soft, Softer, Softest

Purpose

- To solidify that the player's weight is staying back on the stride.
- To get the player accustomed to going back up the middle with off-speed pitches.
- To teach the player patience when facing a pitcher who throws very slow.

Drill

- The player and feeder assume their normal positions for short toss.
- The feeder calls out "stride."
- When the stride foot comes down the feeder throws the ball with as little velocity as possible.
- The feeder will go in a sequence where each pitch in the block of four is slower than the last one. At pitch number four there should be considerable arch in the trajectory of the ball.
- The goal for the hitter is to stay back and go right back up the middle.
- A perfect block of four in this drill would be four line drives off the screen.

Ball - Hit

Purpose

- To teach the player to see the ball as it leaves the pitcher's hand.
- To teach the player to track the ball with his eyes all the way to contact.
- To incorporate the previous two statements and teach the player to be on time with the baseball.

Drill

- The player and feeder will assume their normal positions for short toss.
- The feeder will be simply throwing strikes down the middle of the plate for the entire drill.
- In the first sequence of the drill the player will call out "ball" when he sees the ball leave the thrower's hand. It is the thrower's job to correct any tardiness with the player's call of "ball."
- In the second sequence of the drill the player will no longer call "ball," he will however call "hit" when the ball and bat come in contact. Once again it is the thrower's job to correct tardiness.
- In the last sequence of the drill the player will call both "ball" and "hit" for each pitch.
- The thrower may mix in a bluff throw in which a full arm motion is given, but the ball is not released from the hand. This will ensure that the player is actually seeing the baseball out of the thrower's hand and not just getting the timing down as to when the ball comes out of the hand.