

The Stride

Stride

The stride is the simplest aspect of the hitting process to teach. Unfortunately, it is not always the simplest to perform. The stride is a mechanism that is used for timing purposes. It simply helps the player to get his body started in order to initiate the swing. The stride, if it is not done properly, can lead to many different problems for the player. The most common of these problems occurs when the player fails to keep his weight back on his stride. This will put the player at an extreme disadvantage because he has now become susceptible to off speed pitches. As was stated earlier, the stride is the simplest aspect to teach. There are only a few basic rules to follow.

1. The stride should be 4 - 6 inches long. If the stride becomes longer than this the player will find that it will become more difficult to keep his weight back. It certainly would not be wrong for the stride to be shorter than 4 inches. Remember, it is only a timing mechanism. If the player would feel more comfortable, he could actually pick his foot up and put it back down in the same spot. The important thing to remember with this aspect of the stride is to make sure it is not longer than 6 inches.
2. When the player strides he should not be picking his foot up off the ground more than 1 - 2 inches. It should be stressed that this stride is more like a glide. It should be smooth.
3. When the player's foot comes down it should still be closed. This means that the toe should not open up to the pitcher. If this happens the player will certainly be losing power.
4. The most important thing to remember with the stride is to keep the weight back. The way that the player does this is by striding to the inside ball of the foot. This is the only portion of the foot that should come in contact with the ground until the actual swing is started. The player should not be on his toes, rather on the inside ball of the foot. The weight should still be at a 60:40 ratio. Remember, 60% of the weight on the back side and 40% of the weight on the front side.

