

The Swing

Swing

The swing is the most difficult aspect of the hitting process to teach and learn. This is because it requires the player to be mechanically sound and relaxed at the same time. While working on the swing in practice the player should be aiming to perfect the mechanics of a perfect swing. On the other hand, when the player hits in a game he must forget about the mechanics, relax and let his ability take over. The mechanical aspects of the swing will be described in this section. They will be described in the order that they would actually occur in a perfect swing. Keep in mind that there is no fraction of time in between each aspect. However, there is a specific sequence for these aspects. These aspects actually flow into one another. It is also important to note that the swing starts after the stride foot has come down.

Back Foot

- The back foot is what starts a player's swing. The player will begin his swing by turning his back foot. There have been many phrases coined to describe this movement, the most popular of which is probably "smash the bug." This is the action that the player is going to take to start his swing. It is a twisting or turning of the back foot. The player should not be coming up on his toe with this movement. The twisting should take place on the ball of the foot.

Hips

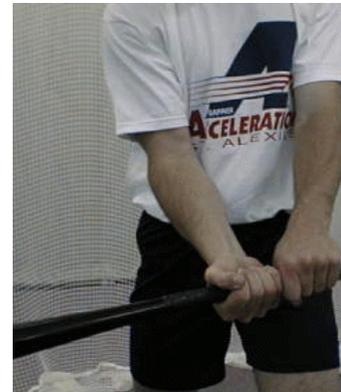
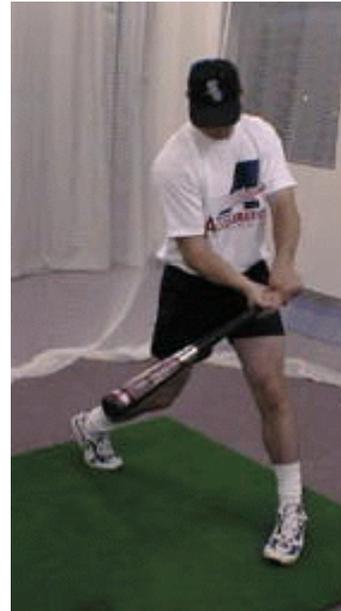
- The hips are the next in line to move. The hips should turn with both quickness and power. The player should think of this movement as more of a snap than a turn.
- The hips are the major source of power. The player must be reminded to think of quickness and power when moving his hips.

Hands

- The hands are the last part to move in the swing. In this section the arms will also be discussed because they are so closely related in the path of the swing.
- The goal for the arms and hands is to take a short swing to the ball. The way that the player does this is by keeping his hands inside the baseball. The hands must travel in a straight line from the position in the stance to contact. They cannot go out. This will produce a long swing. Remember, the player is trying to take a short swing to the baseball.

Power-position

- Power position is a term that will be used to describe the position of the player while at contact with the baseball. Being in this position will result in the most proficient output of power possible.
- The back foot should be at full rotation. This means it must be turned at least so that the shoe laces are facing the pitcher. Remember, the player should be on the ball of the back foot, not on the toes.
- The hips should have rotated fully to be facing the pitcher.
- Weight should have shifted to the front side so 40% of the weight is on the backside and 60% of the weight is on the front side.
- Shoulders should be level.
- The back elbow should be close to the hip and slightly in front of the hip. It should be bent at approximately a 90 degree angle.
- The front elbow should be down. It should not be forced down to the point that it makes the player uncomfortable. However, if the front elbow comes up it will lead the player to dip his swing. The front elbow should not be straight. It should be slightly bent.
- The hands should be in a palm-up/palm-down position. The top hand should be such that if the player were to open his top hand in the power-position his palm would be facing straight up. The bottom hand should be such that if the player were to open his bottom hand in the power-position his palm would be facing straight down. This will give the player the palm-up/palm-down position which is the most powerful position for the hands.
- The head and eyes must be down focusing on contact.



Points to Remember

- The back foot is what starts the swing.
- The majority of the power is generated from the bottom half of the body. The player must be certain that the bottom half is moving before the hands.
- The sequence of the swing is as follows; back foot-leads-hips, hips-lead-hands, hands-lead-barrel of bat. This is the sequence of the swing. When put together it should appear as one fluid motion.
- The player is striving to be short to the ball.
- The power-position is the most powerful position for the player to be in at contact.