

## **TOSS DRILL**

### **PURPOSE**

To develop hitting accuracy and technique through repetition

### **EQUIPMENT**

A bat, a bucket of soft-covered balls or rag balls, access to a fence

### **TIME**

2 to 4 minutes per player

### **PROCEDURE**

1. One player with a bat faces a fence three to five feet away.
2. The coach kneels next to the player on a 45-degree angle
3. The coach tosses the ball underhand in front of the batter. The player swings at the ball and hits it against the fence.
4. The player gathers the balls and puts them in a bucket for the player in the next round.

### **KEY POINTS**

This is one of the most effective hitting drills because players are guaranteed a lot of swings in a short time.

1. Use soft-covered balls or rag balls that won't bounce forcefully off the fence toward the player. Besides being safer, softer balls won't damage the fence.
2. The player should practice a level swing rather than taking an uppercut at the ball. The ball should hit the wall or fence no higher than the batter's shoulder height.
3. Eventually players can pair up for this drill. One player can toss to the hitter, then the players can switch positions.
4. Safety is a major concern. Make sure there is plenty of space between hitters and that all batters begin their turn at the same time. No one should gather the balls until everyone is finished.
5. Younger players can use a big plastic bat for this drill.

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6. To discourage players from turning their heads too soon when swinging, instruct them to yell, "Hit" when the bat makes contact with the ball.

### **Variations**

1. High and low. This drill is a challenge for youth players. The coach tosses two rag balls from one hand and calls out either "High" or "Low." The batter must swing at whichever ball the coach calls out.
2. Color ball. The coach has six rag balls. Three are wrapped in white masking tape; three are wrapped in blue painter's tape. Instead of calling out, "High," or "Low," he calls out, "White," or "Blue," and the player swings at whichever ball the coach calls out.
3. Bunting. Using rag balls for bunting is an easy and effective variation. A player tosses the rag ball to a partner in the bunting position, who bunts the ball into the fence. More advanced players can use a broom handle instead of a bat.

