

# HITTING

## Bating Stance

The term *bating stance* refers to the position of the body and bat while awaiting a pitch.

### Positioning the Feet

- The feet should be about shoulder width apart.
- The foot closest to the pitcher should be lined up near the front edge of home plate.
- The batter should be able to tap the outside part of home plate with the end of the baseball bat.
- The feet should be parallel and be pointing in the direction of home plate.

### Positioning The Body

- The knees must be slightly bent. The amount of bend in the knees can vary according to the batter's preference.
- The hitter should be positioned so that there is a slight bend at the waist.

### Positioning The Bat

- The handle of the bat should be near the back shoulder.
- The barrel of the bat should be above and behind the hitter's head.

### Gripping The Bat

- The middle knuckles of the hands should be lined up. Some hitters prefer not to do this perfectly. That's acceptable, but the knuckles should be nearly in line.
- The bat ~~should~~ be held comfortably in the hands. The bat should NOT be squeezed.

## Loading Phase

Many young hitters swing the bat after the ball is past them, and many times this happens because they don't get into the *load position* in time.

*Load position* refers to the position that the body and bat need to be in just prior to the swing. The loading phase refers to striding and the positioning of the bat. This phase is important because, if done properly, it can help the hitter make solid contact with the baseball on a more consistent basis.

### Striding

- Stride refers to the movement of the front foot during the loading phase.
- Around the time that the pitcher lifts the knee, the batter should lift the front knee up and back towards the catcher (Knee height varies from hitter to hitter). The body weight should be shifted towards the back leg.
- About the time that the pitcher releases the ball, the batter should be striding towards the pitcher and transferring the body weight forward.
- The stride of the front foot needs to be short in length, no longer than 6 inches.
- The hitter should have the stride foot (front foot) down well before the ball gets to homeplate.

### Positioning The Bat

- The handle of the bat must be near the back shoulder when the front foot (stride foot) lands.
- The barrel of bat should be above and behind the hitter's head when the stride foot first hits the ground.
- The bat should be on the same plane as the baseball when contact is made.

### Turning The Hips

- If lower body strength and bat speed are to be maximized, it is essential that the hips be turned during the swing.
- In order to turn the hips during the swing, the hitter should pivot on the ball of the back foot.

- Hitters should keep their eyes on the baseball until contact is made.
- The hitter's head should not follow the body when it turns.

### **Following Through**

- After contact is made with the ball, the barrel of the bat should maintain a smooth, slightly upward path, which ends with the hands rolling over.
- The handle of the bat should stop around the left shoulder for a right-handed batter and around the right shoulder for a left-handed batter.
- The barrel of the bat should wrap around the upper back.
- The hitter's chin should be over the shoulder area at the completion of the swing.