



Hitting Guide for Beginner and Youth Players

Our Coach Baseball Right Hitting Basics Guide for Beginner and Youth Players is designed to help coaches and parents know what hitting fundamentals to teach their beginning youth players and strategies on how to coach them. If you're new to coaching or want to establish some basic hitting ideas and concepts for your players, then our Coach Baseball Right Hitting Guide for Beginner and Youth Players is an absolute essential coaching resource for you!

3 Main Principles of Hitting (Every Player Needs to Know)

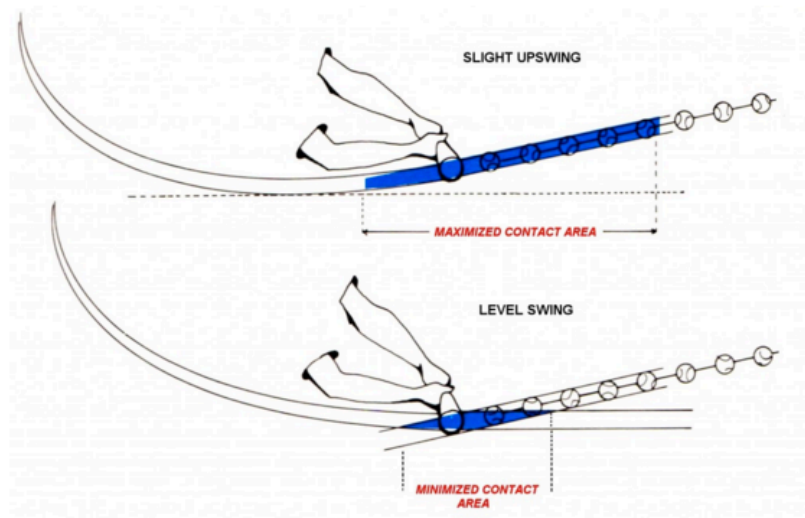
Every coach and parent should use the following three principles to teach their players hitting. More importantly use these hitting principles to understand what you're trying to accomplish with your hitting instruction and practice. Please teach these three principles to any age and skill level player. Quiz your players. Chant each principle out during stretches. Talk about these principles all the time! Just differentiate or scale how you teach your player(s) based on their age and skill.

[PRINCIPLE 1] Plane the Pitch

Successful hitters, at any age and skill level, should plane the pitch when they swing. Planning the pitch means the hitter's swing or path of the bat should stay in the same plane or the same level as the ball for the longest period of time. By doing so, the hitter has a greater chance of making contact.

If this swing is done correctly, the plane or the path of the swing would be slightly up as the bat meets the ball. Swinging level to the ground is ok, but you will not be in the path of the ball for the longest amount of time.

What about swinging down on the ball? Swinging down on the ball was once thought to be a good suggestion, however, it is no longer considered a good hitting fundamental.

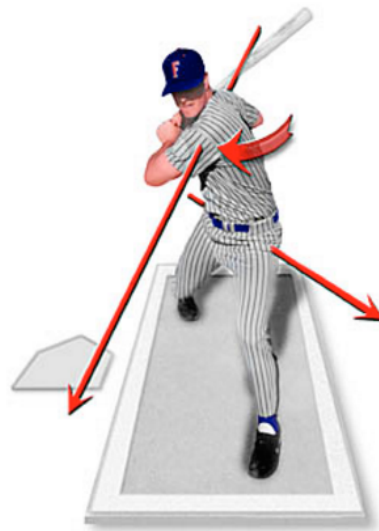


[PRINCIPLE 2] Torque (Generate Power)

Successful hitters, at any age and skill level, should try to position their bodies to generate torque during their swing. Torque is the creation of power in the swing.

Torque and the power supply in the swing comes from the separation of the bottom half (hips down) and the top half (hips up to shoulders). When the front heel hits the ground, the hips should start to rotate, while the front shoulder will not immediately go.

This creates torque or separation between the two halves of the body. This separation creates the source of power in the swing.



[PRINCIPLE 3] Stay short to the ball

The last principle successful hitters do is they stay *short to the ball*. Staying short to the ball means getting the hands and bat into the hitting zone as quickly and efficiently as possible. In other words, there should be no wasted or extended movement for bat and hands during the swing.

One way to be efficient is to keep the hitters hands inside the ball meaning that the elbow gets to a spot near the ribs as the hitter gets into the approach. Many youth hitters throw their hands out to the ball, but this causes their hands to work against the upper body and not with it. When done correctly, the hitter who keeps his hands inside the ball will be able to keep more balls fair, and he will have a short compact swing.

A long swing takes a longer time to get into the hitting zone and will also impact timing, usually making the hitter late in swinging and hitting the ball. Many young players have a long swing because they use a bat that they can't swing properly (i.e. too heavy and/or long) or they have not built the muscle memory yet.

Hitting Strategies for Beginner and Youth Players

Every coach, parent and hitting instructor should have a specific set of strategies that align with the three principles of hitting mentioned above. Here are four strategies we recommend following and implementing both at a player and team level:

Batting Practice

Batting practice should be meaningful and strategic for any level or age group. Whether your kids are on the younger level (for instance ages 4 to 8) start with throwing batting practice to them on one knee or underhand. The most important part is to get your younger players to swing at everything they can reach! Congratulate them even when there is contact made (not necessarily a hit!) When you have older players, there are more concrete things we would recommend doing during batting practice, but the strategy above should be your top priority - **SWING THE BAT!**

Hitting Approach

An approach is the plan that hitters take with them to the plate. All hitters have an approach. They may not know they do, but they do. When players are younger or just starting out, their approach should be to hit whatever they can put their bat on. Be aggressive and hit what you can hit. You should talk about this approach with your hitter(s) as often as possible. Ask them what their approach is as often as possible. Get them to be as fully aware of this approach as often as possible. Teach the young kids that hitting the ball is good, and to be a good player you need to want to hit the ball, and hit the ball hard.

Commonalities of Good Hitting

As a parent or a coach, you should begin to identify some commonalities of good hitting in your player regardless of their age and skill level. Start to focus on the following commonalities and as your player grows and develops there are other commonalities you can look for when that time comes. Here are **some** of the primary commonalities of good hitting for beginner and youth players:

• **Front Toe Touch**

Use these simple checks to see if your hitter is mimicking commonalities of good hitting:

- When the hitter strides, the front shoulder (closest to pitcher) should be slightly down
- When the hitter strides, the knob of bat pointed at catcher's feet
- Proper Stride Length should give the player good balance and a good foundation
- Don't worry about their back elbow

• **Approach (when hitter's bat is parallel to ground)**

- Hands below front bill of helmet
- Don't drop the bat head, it needs to be parallel to ground

• **The Swing**

For beginner and youth players, here are the two commonalities you should watch for and encourage them to do:

- Swing hard
- Finish the swing (do not stop at contact)

Common Hitting Flaws

Just as we identify some of the hitting commonalities, it is also important to understand some common hitting flaws that you'll see in your hitter's swing from time to time. There are many more hitting flaws, but at this point, here are some very common flaws you'll see in this age group. Here are some of the most common hitting flaws:

• **Swinging Down on Ball**

For many years swinging down on the ball for backspin was taught. This was a common belief. This technique is no longer accepted as a fundamental. Backspin is created when a hitter has good mechanics and hits the ball square slightly below the midpoint of the ball.

• **Bat Drag**

Bat drag occurs at the short approach part of the swing (right when the hitter's belly button begins to face home plate). The hitter's elbow

is closer to the pitcher than the knob of the bat, the hands are outside the frame and the bat is far away from the hitter's head. This leads to a very slow and long swing. You will find most young hitters have bat drag because they can not swing their bats properly. This issue continues for many hitters as they grow older.

- **Bat Wrap**

Bat wrap happens when the hitter gets their front foot down at toe touch. If the bat is wrapped around the head such that a string on the end of the bat falls and hits the helmet, that is great. But, if that string misses the helmet the bat has been wrapped. This leads to other issues later in the swing.

- **Timing**

Timing is the ability of the hitter to be able to go through proper swing mechanics and deliver the bat to the ball at the proper spot. If the hitter is looking for a middle in fastball, contact would be the front foot. If the hitter was looking for a pitch on the outer part of the plate, contact would be a bit deeper, maybe just behind the front knee. For younger players, it might be a good idea to have the hitter start his load when the pitcher arm get to its highest spot. If the hitter is too early doing this, start later. If the hitter is late, then start the load process a bit earlier. The load is the rearward movement of the swing. NOTE: the load is the small rearward movement that takes place at the start of the swing.

Coach Baseball Right Recommendations

Most coaches and parents want to know where they should go from here with this new knowledge. And what is the best way to implement these concepts covered in this hitting guide.

We want to highly recommend the following three Coach Baseball Right resources that we guarantee will provide tremendous value and development for your hitter(s).



Swing Like a Pro Online Hitting Program

One of our most popular yearly programs, Swing Like a Pro Online Hitting Program is a day by day online training program designed to help develop a player's swing over a 20 day period. The program literally helps a player develop and maintain their swing from the ground up. We recommend all players at any skill level to work in this program. Best of all, hitters can work on this program from the comfort of their own home!



Online Hitting Academy

If you want a top-tier hitting program, our Online Hitting Academy is our most comprehensive monthly hitting program. This program combines monthly video analysis of your hitter's swing by our expert hitting instructors, prescribed drills to help any flaws we see in the swing, and provides complete access to our Swing Like a Pro Online Hitting Program. Again, best of all, hitters can work on this program from the comfort of their own home!



Hitting Instructor Checklist

Some of our community members seek out private hitting instruction on their own. So we created a *free* resource to help them make a sound and thoughtful decision on who to choose for private hitting instruction. Our free Hitting Instructor Checklist, available to our free members, details certain characteristics and qualities you should look for before starting private hitting lessons.

Visit CoachBaseballRight.com for more information!