

Movements Analysis: Hitting a Baseball

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Accompanying Video: Attached, video is from my own archives

General Comments about Hitting:

1. Hitting a baseball is an extremely difficult thing to do; there are so many little things that can go wrong on every swing. Players who get three hits out of every ten times are considered the best hitters in the game. That means a 70% failure rate is still considered very good.
2. Each batter has their own stance and swing. As long as the bat stays through the hitting zone in a flat motion, how the bat gets there is mostly irrelevant.
3. There are a number of mistakes a hitter can make that cause the bat to not stay in the hitting zone. Some of the most common mistakes include when the batter “steps out” or away from the plate, when they pull their head, drop their hands or dip their back shoulders. Each of these can cause the hitter to either miss the ball or not make solid contact.
4. Hitters must take hundreds of swings in an effort to refine their swing and reduce the chance of making one of those mistakes.

Swing #1: A Good Swing

This hitter has a good wide base with his feet slightly wider than shoulder width apart; it allows him to have good balance before the pitch and then when he transfers his weight during his swing.



In the first two swings our hitter has very good footwork, his front foot stays on the same plane, and it does not go backward. Our hitter also does a good job of keeping his head on the ball, as they say “you can’t hit what you can’t see.” Finally you can see the rotation in his hips as he creates power to drive the ball. As a result of the good footwork, rotation of his hips and keeping his head on the ball, our hitter makes solid contact.



With the first two swings the batter is doing a very good job, these are the swings that we want to try to get the batter to duplicate each time he hits off the tee. It is important to let the batter know when he does make good swings as soon as it happens, that way he knows how the good swing should feel. Giving positive feedback is extremely important to keep spirits up and to let the players know when they are doing something right.

Swing 3: Problems arise

With swing 3 our batter again starts in a solid position, but something happens in this swing that has not happened in the first two.



What our batter does to create an issue revolves around his front foot. When he starts his swing he lifts his front foot. When he comes down, instead of being on a good forward plane towards the pitcher, he steps away from the plate; we refer to this as “stepping out.” When he does this it causes his body to open up and he can not cover the outside half of the plate, reducing his effectiveness as a hitter, since he can not cover the full plate, but

rather just the inside half of the plate. In this swing out batter still manages to make contact, only now due to his body position he is pulling the ball.

Swing 3(Poor): look at the left foot



Swing 1 (Good): Left foot



Looking at the front foot placement, and using the shadow from the fence it is obvious the front foot has moved away from the plate, opening up the body in the swing. When a batter steps out it often leads to them also pulling their head. In this case he did not do that but.....

Swing 4: The Head

Our batter starts in the same position again, but when he swings this time he does not step out but this time he really pulls his head. It is such a bad pull that he pretty much misses the ball.

Swing 4 (bad): LOOK at that Head!!!



Swing 1 (Good): Eyes on the Ball



The batter can't hit what he can't see, thus a little flub hit that is shown in the video.