



GO WARRIORS!

West Bend “Warriors” Youth Baseball

Hitting fundamentals, what we will call the (4) points of hitting

1. Stance

- Preferred that feet are slightly more than shoulder width with knees slightly bent and on the balls of the feet. Weight should be about 60% back foot, 40% front foot. (balanced position)
- Knuckles should line up and recommended way is like your knocking on the door, but not an absolute
- Back elbow should be slightly higher than front elbow. Stress the importance of hitting downhill. This is an area where young hitters will get lazy.
- Back elbow should be relaxed and hands should be in a stacked position
- Hands should be up by armpits and back, hands should be 6-8 inches from the body. Note: Hitters who place their hands above shoulder level will need to have very quick hands to get to the ball inside.
- Prefer bat to stay relatively quiet @ a 45% angle (preferred). O.K. to have some slight movement to create rhythm.

2. Load and Stride

- During the load a 2-3 inch inward turn should take place, hands move slightly back right when pitcher is to release/landing foot is down. (Think split strides drill)
- A hitter’s stride should be directly to pitcher and short (2-3 inches) and think of trying to land on thin ice when striding with the front foot (land on big toe). Stride should take place after pitcher has released.
- The load and stride work hand in hand and are separated by tenths of a second
- Remember the stride is not part of the swing
- A foot up, foot down approach is the most common method used at all levels

Coaching point: Look for a high hip on the back side. Back side hip should stay taller than front side hip.

3. Pivot or Rotation

- Squish the bug. Look for hitter to be on the ball of his back foot
- Back knee starts the rotation, back knee and leg should form an “L” shape
- Look for spikes to be pointing toward the catcher
- Important to get hips through, hip rotation will vary on location. Greater hip rotation will occur on an inside vs. outside pitch. Wherever the pitch is located, the back knee and belly button should face the direction the ball will travel

Coaching tip: Back knee to the ball, ground up rotation

1. Swing and Finish

- Chin tucked on front shoulder, looking for head to stay as still as possible and level. Think head behind the ball.
- Launch the hands from the shoulders, 6-8 inches from the body is desired.
- At point of contact look for palm up, palm down hand position. Top hand is up, bottom hand is down
- Look for barrel of bat to be pointed toward pitcher's forehead. This will help kids get additional power and oomph!
- Both hands on the bat preferred, not an absolute
- Look for the bat on the follow through to be level and at the front shoulder. This will help develop a level swing.
- Look for hitter to remain in a balance position, (front leg locked, hip behind the knee) not falling off to the side.

Coaching point: Bat knob to the ball, hands lead.

***** Please note it will take several years of practice and constant repetition to get to get the “desired swing”. Be patient and work hard to improve and get better. *****

AVOIDING THE INSIDE PITCH- PROPER TECHNIQUE

1. Upper body turns away from pitch
2. Chin dips to the chest to protect the neck
3. Shoulder rises to protect the face
4. Elbows drop in close to the sides to protect the ribs
5. Drop the bat

** Avoid jumping away from the ball with your arms moving upward, this could leave yourself open especially the rib area where a major injury could occur.

PROPER BUNTING FUNDAMENTALS

1. Be up in the batter's box
2. Your top hand is near the label on the bat
3. Hands out in front of the body with knees slightly bent
4. Angle of the bat should be relatively flat (keep bat barrel slightly higher than the knob of the bat)
5. When a runner is on 1st, we're trying to bunt the ball to the first base side, when a runner is on 2nd we're trying to bunt the ball on the 3rd base side.
6. Try to bunt the top half of the baseball, trying to bunt the bottom half of the ball will lead to pop ups.
7. Try to bunt the top half of the ball
8. Good bunter catch the ball off the bat, don't jab at the ball
9. Keep your eyes just over the bat and bend your knees.
10. In deadening the ball on a bunt should try to bunt closer to the end of the bat.