

The Grip

Question: Your hands are the only thing connected to the bat. Why is that important? What impact does your grip have on the way your arms move and ultimately deliver the swing

Your hands are the first thing touching the handle of the bat. The pressure, tension, and angles created by the grip will largely determine how your swing develops and releases. Not much athletic ability is needed to grip the bat correctly, however, a tremendous amount of awareness is needed to repeat an efficient grip each at bat. In addition, the grip is counterintuitive b/c a firm grip does not equate to higher bat speed or more efficient swing direction. Rather it's the opposite. A more relaxed top hand can lead to higher bat speeds / more efficient swings. The ability to hinge and flex your wrists is important. In addition, if you can get to the point where your top hand has the 'waiter' feel, your top wrist/ forearm will pivot through much more efficiently. The 'waiter' feel will help you keep your hands above the ball throughout the swing as well.

Grip

- the angles and tension created will start a 'cascading' effect on the position of the wrists, forearms, trail elbow and lead shoulder
- you have two hands next to each other on the bat but each hand has different roles/the bat is a rigid lever
- different grips shown below are based on experience level and preference
- the hands and fingers are very sensitive area that send/receive signals to the brain. The rest of the body will often organize itself on those signals.



-go after this feel with your rear elbow and hands

Try to imagine an umbrella opening



- it's important to understand that the wrist/hand at the end of the bat or umbrella is stabilizing the object and also providing a pivot point for the bat. The wrist on the top is doing alot of dynamic, precise, work.



develop your hands

pick up an egg softly and then pick up a kettle bell to get the sense of touch and strength needed to do each.

- snap sunflower seeds
- skip a rock
- spin a shiny cue ball

All to get a feel with your fingers, hands and wrists

Feel

- like the wrists are turning inward, in you fingers less deep in your palm
- feel like the bat handle is **RESTING ABOVE** your rear hand for as long as possible
- feel the **inner part of the rear forearm radiating**

Visual



Youth



- trail wrist / hand feel like a waiter holding a tray of drinks versus trail hand holding a shoulder strap of a backpack. This waiter lock will help keep your hands high above the pitch and avoid the torso collapsing in an attempt to push the swing. Rather it will give you a better chance to stay back and pivot the swing against a firm torso



waiter feel for the Georgia and Yankees players

- experienced 12u and older this would be a grip to try out. you would see a difference
- trail hand is relaxed. imagine a screen door ready to close on it's own b/c of a loaded spring
- arms will feel lighter with this grip /position of rear elbow
- Hands high helps raise the rear elbow naturally
- Go for the Waiter feel with rear wrist



- notice the angle of the rear wrist for both Pujols and Judge. Tremendous leverage stored here

- rear palm facing towards pitcher and sky. More of an advanced approach and trust. Enables one to pivot rear forearm towards ribcage quite dynamically and powerfully



more advanced

- relaxed top hand to to catch the handle and pivot powerfully

maximizing leverage



- You want to fully maximize the leverage in your wrists when they start at this angle. Especially the top wrist.



top wrist needs to be a piston

be deliberate to achieve the pendulum feel



top wrist

- practice moving the bat up and down with your wrist using a pendulum dynamic from 9 to 3 pm



- try to imagine the lead arm, bottom wrist and bat are all **one tool**...receiving dynamic energy from the top wrist



bottom wrist/hand holding the bat, providing a pivot or stability of sorts



imagine opening an umbrella, one hand holds back the umbrella while the other hand does precise work

Push Yourself to Grow as a Hitter

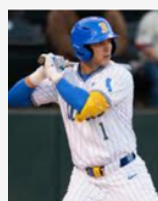


to the left is a very common grip and look, if you start like the hitter to the left there is no other option but to lift n chop, cut across the ball resulting in ground balls or soft pop ups to the right side a lot of the time.



not to pick on the hitter in the white jersey, but if that hitter made one or two adjustments to the Georgia's player stance in terms of grip and rear elbow, their swing would start to trend in the right direction.

Remember, ****your hands are the only body part connected to the bat.**** Yes, energy is transferred from the ground up. However, most of us are not able to subconsciously organize our bodies like a Jordy Bahl or Roch Chawollosky (pictured here). With that said, you have to LOAD the hands, wrists and forearm...prepare the muscles and angles in those body parts to swing the bat.



As in the picture here, generally speaking, almost any player can relax their arms/hands under and supporting the bat like the UCLA player is doing. This feel is happening right before the pitcher is starting the windup.

The tricky part...having the courage to try this and repeat it. It's normal to be nervous, grip the bat tightly, swing real fast or have a feel to make safe contact. Against better pitching you have to get a 'running start.' Strong athletes can 'out-athlete' developing pitching....faster/better pitching much harder to do. What other sport has the defense starting with the ball?? Hitting is a reaction.

Think of it this way, if the upper third of your body is relaxed, then presented with a task, the brain will likely send a signal to other parts of the body for help. On the flip side, if everything is tense on the upper third, you are essentially cutting off the connection to lower part of your body.

Even the best HS hitters in your area might have difficulty getting loaded into positions like the Texas softball player pictured here. At the very least get these images/thoughts in your mind. We think it will get you trending in the right direction.

Getting the feel of the UCLA baseball player pictured here will help you create the necessary stretch between your hands and tautness against your lead shoulder. If you are trying a more advanced approach like 'tipping the barrel forward' you need to be very deliberate and start while the pitcher is in the windup. 'Tipping the barrel forward' allows you to get a running start and more time to stop the swing when needed because it's technically a 'longer' swing'. But you have to allow for a slight counter lean of the torso so the arms and barrel can be released forward. The torso needs to stay/lean back to provide stability.

At home try rehearsing these things in a mirror or against a pitcher playing on TV. Pick up a bat/pvc pipe hinge it up and down with only your top hand to get that feel of loading your hands. Your hands are very sensitive and send all sorts of signals to the brain. These signals will likely start organizing the rest of your body subconsciously. ****Your wrists have all of sorts of dynamic power waiting to be unlocked.**** Good luck!