

# Swing Phases & Hitting Mechanics



Phase One: The Stride



Phase Two: The Pivot



Phase Three: The Swing

## Hitting Mechanics:

- The batter should get in a good athletic position with a wide enough base so that she is balanced throughout the entire swing.
- She grips the bat comfortably and slings it over the back shoulder. She lines up the door-knocking knuckles. Elbows are down and in a comfortable upside down V position.
- Wrists should be cocked and elbows bent. She lifts the bat off the shoulder so it is in a good launch position.
- There should be a slight bend in the knees and slight bend in the hips.
- The lead shoulder should point toward the pitcher.
- Both eyes should be on the ball.
- The body should be relaxed and loose.

### Phase One:

- The batter takes a short, quick step and gets the stride heel down as fast as possible.

### Phase Two:

- The hips start to snap open. The belly button acts like a flashlight that is pointed directly at the ball.
- The hands move forward – the batter should think contact, extend through and follow through.
- The chin starts over the front shoulder and finishes over the back shoulder. The head remains level the whole time.

### Phase Three:

- The batter drives the knob of the bat into the path of the ball.
- With the batter's front arm – she should unlock the shoulder, the elbow and then the wrist in that order.

## Common Hitting Problems to Watch For

- Barrel of the bat is not in a good launch position.
- Door-knocking knuckles are not aligned when gripping the bat.
- The batter's body is stiff during the swing.
- The batter overstrides or collapses the front leg in phase one.
- The batter does not pivot in phase two.
- Common phase three (swing) problems include: straightening the front arm as the hands come forward; dropping the bat; and casting out the bat before the hands come forward.

# Bunting Basics

- To get into bunting position – batters should either pivot off the back foot so that the front shoulder swings open and the body opens up to the pitcher or pivot off both feet so that the front side stays in.
- Once in bunting position the bat should be held at a slant with the barrel at the top of the strike zone.
- The bottom hand grabs the handle and the top hand pinches the neck of the bat with the thumb and index finger. Elbows are down.
- The batter should bend the knees to bring the barrel of the bat down to the lower parts of the strike zone.
- The batter should catch the ball not stab at it. They should also remain balanced and not lean forward.
- Additional Tip: to bunt an outside pitch fair strive to make contact with the outside of the ball. That means pulling the knob of the bat in toward the belly button.



# Bunting for Points Drill

## Purpose

Players learn to deaden the ball and to bunt to specific areas.

## Drill Setup

Draw three semi-circles in the dirt in front of home plate. The first is 4 feet from the plate. The second is 8 feet and the third is 12 feet.



## How it Works

1. The batter tries to bunt the ball into one of the three zones. A bunt into the first zone is 5 points, into the second zone is 3 points and into the third zone is 1 point.
2. Players keep track of their score and the player finishing with the highest score gets a prize or gets to pick what drill is done to end practice.

## Coaching Tips

- Remind players they should be lowering the bat by bending their knees not by bending at the waist.
- When bunting, hitters should have a bit wider than normal stance to increase their balance.
- The barrel of the bat should always start at the top of the zone and be at a slight angle.