

# Hitting Breakdown:

## Stance

- Feet comfortably slightly more than shoulder width apart.
- Toes should be 8~12 inches from the plate with the lead foot aligning with the front of the plate. This may vary depending on the size or reach of the batter and their bat (see swing section).
- Legs as straight as possible with knees unlocked.
- Crouching only makes the strike zone smaller, but won't help you hit better.

## Grip

- Fingers firmly, but not tightly around the handle of the bat. Do not palm the bat.
- Knocking knuckles (second joint) on both hands lined up. Batters have a tendency to turn their hands in which is okay if they use it successfully. Lining up the knuckles induces a flat swing and will help correct uppercuts and chops.
- Hands held high at or above the shoulder (close to the back ear).

## Loading (or Trigger)

- This is done while the pitcher is winding up just before the release. Each batter tends to develop their own load.
- A small step forward (to the Pitcher) or simply weight transfer to the back leg.
- Drawing arms back as far as is comfortable.
- Be careful that the bat does not fall behind the head at this stage as it slows their reaction and requires very fast bat speed to compensate.
- At the younger ages avoid teaching a step because it creates vision (changes the plane of view) and timing (when and how big to step) issues. Stepping also promotes a weakness for high or rising pitches.
- Older players who have too large a step need to develop their pivot.
- Stepping generates a weakness for high fastballs or any other rising pitch.

## Swing

- The swing starts with the hips rotating to the closed position. As the hips begin to turn, the torso, then shoulders and arms follow. This action is much like an “unwind”. The arms should stay comparatively close to the body as they should not begin to extend until over the plate.
- As the hips rotate, the legs must accommodate with a “pivot”. The front toe should point to the Pitcher or slightly to the right (for a right hander) or left. The back foot should have the heel raised, but the ball of the foot should still be firmly on the ground (squishing the bug). Coming up to the toe will reduce power significantly if done during contact.
- Weight transfer should be biased to the back to slight weight on the front. Transferring too much forward will again reduce power and control. A player will again come up on the back toe when too much weight is transferred.
- As the bat crosses over the plate, the arms begin to extend and the wrists are “rolled” which effectively creates a snap adding even more power to the hit.
- The ball should be contacted in “front” of the plate with your weight even on both legs. There is a slight weight bias to the front leg from the effect of torque due to hip and torso rotation.

## Follow Through

- After contact let the bat swing behind you and drop the bat behind you.
- The top hand should roll over the bottom while weight is transferred to the front leg.
- Once the bat is behind the head, just drop it and take your first step with your back foot.