

# HITTING DRILLS

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## **WALL SWING:**

Stand facing a wall or fence gauging the proper distance by placing the knob of the bat against the belly button and the end of the bat against the wall or fence. With a normal stance and stride, and without moving back from the wall or fence, the hitter takes her normal swing. This drill emphasizes that the hitter must rotate her hips ahead of her hands and pull the knob of the bat through the hitting zone before extending the arms in front of home plate. Hitting the wall or fence with the bat means hitter is sweeping (i.e., extending the arms too soon).

## **TEE DRILL:**

Kneel on the left knee next to a batting tee. Place the knob of the bat against the belly button and the end of the bat against the tee. Using only that distance, execute the hip turn and swing without the barrel of the bat hitting the tee.

## **ONE HAND OFF TEE:**

Kneel on the left knee parallel to the tee. Take 25 swings with the forehand and 25 swings with the backhand. Work on keeping the hands in and drawing a line across the chest as the hands take the bat to the ball.

## **HIP TURN:**

Place a ball on the tee at hip height. Have the hitter take a normal batting stance, but place the bat behind her hips with her arms holding it in place. Have her pivot and knock the ball off the tee. This teaches the proper hip rotation and an explosive turn.

## **KNOB OF BAT TO TEE:**

Place a ball on the tee. Set up properly with stance and hands. Take the knob of the bat to the ball on the tee, hit the ball with the knob, and then follow through with the swing. This emphasizes proper hand movement and a short compact swing.

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## **DOUBLE TEE DRILL:**

Set one tee in front of the plate; set the other behind the plate and two inches higher. Have hitter take proper stance, except farther back from the plate than normal in order to hit the ball in front of the plate. Place ball on front tee and hit the ball without disturbing the back tee.

## **INSIDE-OUT DOUBLE TEE:**

Hitter sets up in normal stance in front of double tee. Place one ball on inside corner in front of plate and another ball outside and in middle of plate. Tell batter to hit one ball or the other without changing her hitting position.

## **ONE HAND TOSS:**

If right handed, hold the bat in the left hand in the ready position. Toss a ball up and out front with the right hand and draw a line across the chest as the hands move to the ball and drive it. This forces the hitter to keep her hands in and to execute a proper swing. Reverse for left handed hitters.

## **SOFT-TOSS:**

Coach takes a position in front and to the side of the hitter. Using any of various size whiffle balls, toss ball out in front of the hitter, using little arc, and observe mechanics. Make sure the hitter is striding and pivoting correctly ("squashing the bug"); rotating the hips with an explosion to the ball; unlocking the shoulders, elbows and wrists in sequence while throwing the hands straight to the ball; watching the ball to the bat; and following through after contact.

## **HIGH-LOW SOFT-TOSS:**

Set up in the same manner as soft toss, only the coach throws two balls into hitting zone and then calls out which one to hit -- either "high" or "low." This forces the hitter to wait until the last minute to start swing. Another way to stop "cheating" is to place a ball in each hand and rotate them before tossing one up. Player is never sure on which rotation the ball will be coming.

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## **DROP TOSS:**

Hitter sets up as in soft toss. Player or coach stands on bucket, chair or milk crate and drops ball into hitting zone. Forces batter to take hands straight to the ball. Batter should not move prior to release of the ball. Vary releases to keep batter from cheating.

## **TOSSES FROM BEHIND:**

Hitter sets up normally for soft toss, only coach tosses ball from behind the hitter. Coach can use tennis balls or regular softballs for this drill. This drill forces the hitter to wait until the last second to start swing and reinforces the quick, compact swing.

## **BUNTING AND SLAP HITTING:**

Players get into groups of three or four. One player pitches, one hits and one or two field. Position players at a distance of 15 feet and practice bunts, drag bunts from left side, and fake slaps that turn into bunts. Move players back to 30 feet and practice slap hitting from the left side.

## **WALKING-HITTING:**

Coach walks slightly in front and to the side of hitter and bounces tennis ball into the hitting zone. Hitter must load up and swing while walking. Bounce 3 or 4 balls before switching batters or returning to start area. Drill can start by using a regular size bat but then progress to using a smaller (or stick) bat.

## **REAR WALL SWING:**

Have hitter stand so fence or wall is directly behind her. Have her take normal swing. If the bat hits the wall, she is dropping her hands or sweeping. Use the wall or fence drill in the batting cage or in soft toss to get instant feedback on whether a player is dropping her hands.