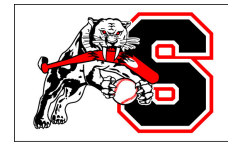


# Batting Practice and Drills



- Be sure to explain the proper swing (“stance, trigger, stride to power position, squash the bug, Mike to Ike, horse on a carousel”); grip the bat with knocking knuckles close to lined up/45 degree angle over back shoulder – weight 60/40 to 70/30 to 50/50 all on inside of legs, emphasize a small stride with front foot closed = hips provide the power to drive the ball!
- Bat Press Drill is a good way to reinforce and slow down the proper swing:
  - With partners (#1 hitter, #2 walker; #1 takes proper stance, trigger, stride to power position/front foot closed – slow motion bat makes contact on back side of #2, follow through = squash the bug, Mike to Ike, horse on a carousel.)
- Squash the bug/throw the hips drill: Hold bat out directly from shoulders with both hands. With front foot closed, pivot the back foot (squash the bug), and rotate hips “violently”
- Stride drill: simply reinforce the small stride with closed front foot = muscle memory. Tell the kids to do this 30-50 times a day so it feels natural.
- Belly Button Drill: Barrel of the bat should be 2-3 inches away from a net or fence when the bat is against the batter’s stomach. Hands must stay in or the bat will hit the net/fence. Lead with the hands – avoids a slow, looping swing and reinforces a shorter, quicker swing.
- Tees are a great way to reinforce all aspects of the swing. Major Leaguers use them all the time!
- Soft toss normal; tosser at a 45 degree angle in front/opposite the batter; toss to the batter’s front knee. Teach this properly and supervise it!
- Soft toss power position: Stance, trigger, stride to contact – then freeze and go back to stance, leaving feet where they are at contact. Now soft toss = forces the hands and hips to do the work and produce more power!
- Soft toss opposite field: tosser stands at a 45 degree angle but located behind the batter. Tosses the ball toward the outside front corner of the plate; the batter lets the ball travel in front of the corner of the plate and focuses on hitting to rightcenter.
- Cage challenge: One batter at a time tosses a ball up to himself and tries to hit a line drive to the back of the cage (or over second base). Each batter gets 10 attempts and one point for each line drive that hits the back net in the air. This drill encourages throwing your hands through the ball.
- 5-4-3-2-1: In competition groups (by position), each batter gets a round of up to five swings, then four, then three, etc. if he hits a line drive or hard ground ball. If not, his round is cut short.
- Be sure all players have a role during batting practice. For example, if we have 12-16 players, we’ll assign them as four small groups. Group 1 hits at home plate and shags foul balls. Group 2 hits soft toss (wiffle balls) against the fence. Group 3 runs bases (sacrifice bunt running, squeeze, hit and run, read the ball, score, during group 1’s BP – reacting to where the ball has been bunted or hit.) Group 4 shags in the field. Rotate all four groups through batting practice.  
\*\*\*Avoid one guy hitting and the rest standing around!\*\*\*