

## Hitting Tips and Drills

1. Keep your hands loose - you get a lot more speed with a relaxed grip than with a tight grip.
2. PUSH with your back hand while PULLING with your front hand - the PUSH will give you a significant increase in power & improve your follow-through.
3. Release your top hand off the bat - this will help give you more extension which means more power. If you don't already do this, it will probably feel uncomfortable at first, but work with it & you should see an increase in power.
4. Keep your hands out in front of the bat - basically throw your hands at the ball so that the last thing that comes through the strike zone is the bat head.
5. Hit the bottom half of the ball - this causes back spin which will carry the ball farther.
6. Make sure you are shifting your weight from your back foot to your front foot as you're powering through the ball. If you keep your weight on your back foot, you just won't generate that much power.
7. Make contact slightly in front of where you're standing because this will be where you're generating your max bat speed. Too far in front, though, and the bat will be decelerating when you hit the ball. Too soon in your swing, & you won't be generating enough speed & won't have enough leverage.
8. Drop your pinky finger off the knob to get more leverage because leverage = speed.
9. Choose pitches in your "power zone". Each of us has his own zone where he can hit with the most power. Try to be patient & really work on pitch selection.
10. "Ikey-Mikey" - start your swing with your chin on your front shoulder (Ikey), and end with your chin on your back shoulder (Mikey). This will keep your head down on the ball and prevent you from opening up too soon & losing power.

Don't worry about hips, back elbow, and all that other stuff; concentrate on your hands - keeping them relaxed, swinging them fast and pulling (accelerating) through the ball to maintain as much speed as possible, and the rest (hips, weight transfer, follow-through, etc.) will take care of itself.

Squats are one of the best exercises to increase hitting power. Your entire body will benefit from this powerful movement. If you can't do squats, try leg presses or weighted dips. They are great for developing power in triceps, chest, and deltoids ... important muscles for hitting. Use compensatory training, i.e.: train with explosiveness! You're trying to increase your bat speed ... you need to train with explosive, fast movements rather than slow, deliberate training.

Accelerate the bat through the ball. You lose bat speed when the bat makes contact with the ball. The key is to accelerate as you are hitting the ball explode the bat through it!!

Maintain a loose grip on the bat. This will help you can gain 5 miles per hour of bat speed and 5-10 miles per hour of ball speed.

Hit through the pitch extending your arms to increase power.

For training in the gym for strength, train 40 minutes per session at most. Concentrate on core exercises that train the major muscle groups. You can train three times a week .

Weight training: Here is a great general system to try that takes very little time and will work wonders for you: 2 times per week do dumbbell bench presses, 2 sets of 8. Followed by dips, 2 sets to 12. When you can do 12, add weight via a weight belt. Follow that with 2 sets of 8 military press (dumbbells, followed by 2 sets of eight dumbbell rows, next chin ups (palms up), End it with bicep curls and you're done!

When making contact with the ball, do not lose site of it. Keep your eyes on that little white ball and you will kill it!

Using light weight bats and here is why:

Let's say a hitter can generate approximately 95MPH bat speed with a 26 ounce bat. And he can generate just about the same 95MPH speed using a 29 ounce bat. You would logically think that I should use the 29 ounce bat, no question. I can swing it as fast and the added mass will allow me to hit the ball farther than with the 26 ounce bat. Logic in this case is wrong!

The important part of the equation that isn't considered in the above comparison is relative bat speed immediately after the ball has left the bat. In other words, how much of the initial 95MPH speed was the hitter able to maintain while hitting through the ball. Here are the facts. The hitter swings both at 95MPH just prior to hitting the ball. With the 26 ounce bat, the bat speed immediately after the ball is hit goes down to 56MPH! With the 29 ounce bat, the bat speed goes down to 49MPH! In other words, with the heavier bat, the hitter is swinging it fast but cannot push the bat through the ball and maintain as much speed as he can with the lighter bat.